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"Separate" victory leaves independents guessing

Bob Moore

OTTAWA — After six days of hearings, five months of waiting and hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, the public, separate and independent school supporters heard the Supreme Court justices unanimously say "the answer is no."

Bill 30, an act to extend full funding to Roman Catholic schools is not inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution of Canada, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The courtroom was full long before the session started. The media had their recorders and notepads ready outside of the chambers. The summer heat built up as spectators sat through several judgments on other matters. When the judgment on school funding was read, there was a notable slumping of shoulders, some in disappointment, some in relief. Lawyers left the room immediately to wait in line for their copies of the reasons behind the judgment.

The court had preserved the status quo. Representatives of the public school boards and public school teachers federations which had reportedly set aside $1-million to fight Bill 30, were visibly upset and terse in their comments. Board members from around Ontario expressed concern about the public funds they will lose to separate schools.

The Catholic school supporters were bubbling over with pleasure while the independent school leaders sensed a mixed blessing.

No news, good news?

Lyle McBurney, Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools, a co-appellant with the Ontario Alliance of Christian School Societies, expressed disappointment that "the court appears not to have seen its duty to address the broader question" of the fairness of only funding religious schools if they belong to Roman Catholic communities and not to any other religious group. On the other hand, McBurney was also pleased that the ruling did not restrict the government from eventually expanding support to alternative schools.

In detail, the Supreme Court limited itself to three questions: is Bill 30 a valid exercise of provincial power according to the Constitution Act of 1867; is the bill valid because it returns rights constitutionally guaranteed by the 1867 Act; and, is the Constitution Act of 1982, particularly the Charter, applicable to Bill 30 and to what extent?

Four of the justices held that the purpose and history of the 1867 Act and legal precedents support the provincial powers behind Bill 30, notably to protect minority religious rights. They also stated that the 1867 Act gave Catholics the right to their own educational system fully parallel to the public system and that without proper funding, this right had been denied. Finally, the judges ruled that the provincial decision was "immune from Charter review" because the relevant section of the 1867 Constitution represents "a fundamental compromise of confederation in relation to denominational schools."

For slightly different reasons, the other justices agreed that the same provides the province with "the jurisdiction to legislate in an apparently selective distinguishing manner with respect to education, whether or not some segments of the community might consider the result to be discriminatory." In other words, without the 1867 Act, Bill 30 would be unfair.

An opening

One implication of this decision is that the door is not closed to the government eventually recognizing the right of parents to support the school of their choice. The battle is now over in the courts and resumes in the political arena where Christian school supporters must appeal to the legislators' sense of fairness.

Perhaps a model can be taken from the Common Schools Act of 1841, referred to by Justice Wilson, which stated that whenever any number of inhabitants of a township, professing a minority faith, dissented from the common schools, they could appoint their own trustees, bind themselves to the obligations and liabilities of the common schools and claim their proportionate share of the education tax.

Calvinist Contact

Second Class Mail
Printed in Canada
Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont.
and Lewiston, NY — see page 2

July 3, 1987
42nd year of publication,
No. 2078

Thinkbit

God has been very gracious to me, for I never dwell upon anything wrong which a person has done, so as to remember it afterwards. If I do remember it, I always see some other virtue in that person."

St. Theresa of Avila

CLAC in Alberta keeps up the fight

Marguerite Witvoet

EDMONTON, Alta. — It was a long, hard week for the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) in Alberta. The local office had from June 5 to June 12 to make their concerns known to the government when it passed a new labour bill limiting the powers of small unions in general and the CLAC in particular.

The Alberta CLAC office was spurred into "fast and furious" action on Friday, June 5, when a new bill, the *Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Act, (Bill 53)*, introduced by Alberta Minister of Labour Ian Reid threatened to "swallow up" the CLAC and leave it powerless beside the bigger unions. The bill was to become law by the following Friday.

The new bill called for a master agreement among unions and employers in the construction industry that would be binding for all such unions in the province, including the CLAC. The parties at the bargaining table would be determined by a 60 per cent majority vote. According to Co Vanderlaan, Alberta CLAC director, this meant it would be "nigh impossible" for CLAC, for its organized employers and for any other small construction unions to be seated at the bargaining table.

Bound and gagged

While the CLAC would not have a voice in the making of the master agreement, they would be bound by it. *Bill 53* specifically included the CLAC among the other unions covered by the bill, and stipulated that, by law, such a master agreement, and any subsequent agreement, would last for five years. "In other words," says Vanderlaan, "CLAC and its contractors would be bound by a master agreement and three subsidiary agreements without any input or participation except for a pre-functionary vote which, for our purposes, really would have no meaning. In other words, we would be swallowed up and lose our reason for

Continued on page 4 ...

CPJ says capital punishment unwarranted

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO, Ont. — With the debate over capital punishment going into the homestretch, Citizens for Public Justice urges Parliament to vote against the reinstatement of the death sentence, because "it is unwarranted and undesirable for Canada at this time."

In a statement to the press CPJ said that it "understands the central message of the Bible to be one of reconciliation based on the redeeming power of Christ's death and resurrection."

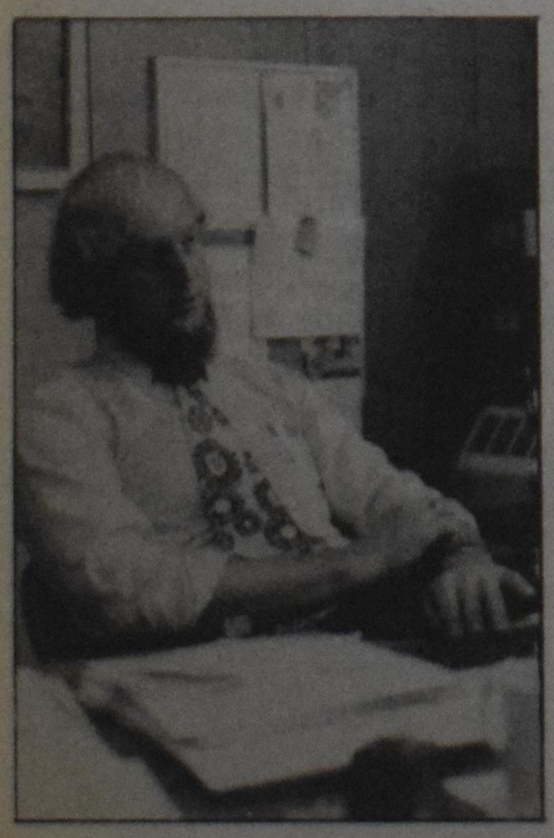
The statement makes reference to CPJ's Guidelines for Christian Political Service, which says that "in a sinful world, government may use coercion to compel adherence to just laws and punish those who violate such laws. Such coercion too is subject to the mandate of public justice."

At the same time CPJ agrees with the position of the Christian Reformed Church when it says that the Bible allows capital punishment but does not require it.

According to CPJ, Canadian society is "stable, resourceful and able in this period of history to deal fairly with serious criminal offenders in various ways short of capital punishment."

Some of the accompanying reasons given by CPJ for saying that capital punishment is not required at this time are: capital punishment is not an effective deterrent, 80 per cent of homocides are not premeditated, Canada's justice system is not fair enough to prevent that innocent people will be convicted, American statistics show that low-income and minority groups are more frequently executed, by finding other ways of dealing with criminals the message is sent out that violence is not acceptable as a way of solving problems.

In the end of its brief CPJ urges positive measures to reform the criminal system and improve social conditions known to affect crime.



Co Vanderlaan, director of the CLAC office in Alberta.

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Music and ministry can mix p.8
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The story of a determined mother who helps her daughter through university p.13
Hendrik Conscience, the champion of Flemish literature p.14

Calvinist Contact

Head office: 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3; Phone: (416) 682-8311. Office hours: 8:15 - 4:15 p.m.

Calvinist Contact: (ISSN 0410-3882) is an independent, Christian weekly, serving the broader Reformed community with news, ideas and opportunities for contact. It supports and encourages every endeavour that seeks to proclaim the Kingship of Jesus Christ.

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Canada mail: Second class mail registration #0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Calvinist Contact*, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.

U.S. mail: *Calvinist Contact* (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for July 31, Aug. 7, Sept. 4, 11 and Dec. 25, by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, NY 14092. Send address changes to *Calvinist Contact*, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Advertising: Display advertising deadline is Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thurs. 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue. See events page for rates.
The publication of comments, opinions, or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either *Calvinist Contact* or Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited.

Subscriptions:	**Canada**	**United States**
Six months	$15.00	$13.50 U.S.
One year	$25.00	$22.50 U.S.
Two years	$47.50	$42.50 U.S.
Three years	$70.00	$62.50 U.S.
Overseas: $90.00 by airmail		$45.00 surface mail

Editorial

How does Christ's atonement work in the courts?

By the time this editorial reaches our readers, the capital punishment debate may be dead ... if the abolitionists had the winning hand, that is. If the pro-capital punishment forces won out, the debate will rage on. Why? Because the liberal press and lobby forces will keep it going.

This is not the time to start the debate anew. We have given our editorial position in favour of a discreet use of capital punishment in a previous issue. But we would like to comment briefly on the tendency by several Christian leaders to tie in the abolition of the death penalty with the redeeming work of Christ.

Are we missing something in our theological development? We cannot follow our brothers and sisters who say that Christ came to bring reconciliation; therefore, instead of meting out the death penalty, the courts should bring reconciliation among people. We used to work with the distinction between personal ethics and official justice. An eye for an eye could guide a court in deciding how to punish a criminal, but it was not to be the way we settled things among ourselves. Has personal ethics now become the norm for the judicial system?

Another thought — the reconciliation that Christ brought apparently benefited the murderer on the cross without taking him off.

We are not suggesting that the sacrifice of Christ has nothing to say to a justice system. We think it says that we should restrain the kind of evil that made Christ's sacrifice necessary and that we should season our justice with mercy. But when the seasoning becomes the meal, the justice system will not be able to fulfil its main task, to uphold God's right to and a citizen's need for a world without crime.

BW

CRC synod — action and boredom

Frustration and boredom were my main feelings while attending the second week of sessions at the CRC synod as a reporter for *Calvinist Contact*. The problem was that synod was grinding slowly — for days! — through matters of detail which could certainly have been handled in better ways. The waste of time, energy and money seemed sinful.

Picture 168 of our brightest and best CRC pastors and elders rewriting parts of the Church Order to make it fit the decisions they were making, and doing that sort of committee work for three days straight. It numbs the mind.

My feeling after all those tedious hours is that synod this year didn't do very much. But that is far from true. In a rather quiet way this synod made some courageous and statesmanlike moves, though there is room for difference of opinion whether they were all for the best.

To my surprise synod took positive action on the "Vision 21" recommendation for major structural changes in denominational boards and central administration of the denomination. Most exciting for me were the moves the synod made on the office of deacon and the place of women as deacons. Synod even came within five votes of deciding that deacons should be delegated to all meetings of classis. And synod gave a standing ovation to Laura Smit after she told synod she would like to become a minister in the CRC, and 50 delegates even voted to say "yes" to her. So the picture of this year's synod is more than that of cardboard figures hunched over small changes in the Church Order for three days.

The ministry of our denomination — like that of our congregations — is unavoidably getting much more complex these days. We need a look at the working of synod in the same way Vision 21 is a look at organizational structure. Who will initiate a study of the changes that need to be made?

A year from now the synod of 1987 will be seen as taking far-sighted action for the good of the church. But I will continue to be upset by all the time it wasted.

RV

No politics at graduation, please

At the latest graduation ceremony of Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 51 students graduated with a Master of Divinity degree. For most it was a joyful occasion. For two women graduates it must have been a mixed pleasure. Laura Smit and Leanne Van Dyk graduated with a degree that normally leads to the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church. Although the two women knew that the door to a pastorate in the Christian Reformed Church was closed to them, hope springs eternal in the human breast. The pain of the closed doors must have been real.

For that reason it is not difficult to understand that the two women wanted to give expression to that hurt in a symbolic way. They did it by wearing white carnations. An article in the *Grand Rapids Press* about the two women provided the background information that would make their protest intelligible. White carnations don't tell the story by themselves.

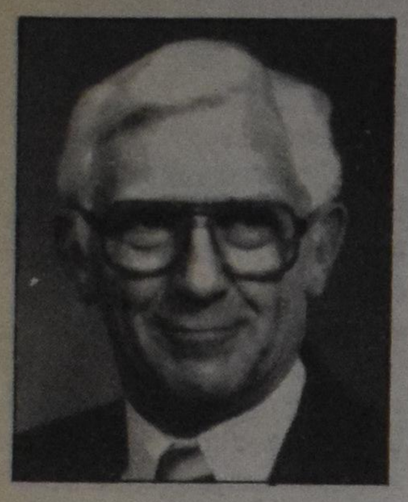
According to a report in *Christian Renewal* by seminarian Dick Wynia, a few fellow graduates and professors also wore white carnations during the ceremony out of solidarity with the two women and in support of the idea that women should be allowed to serve as ministers in the Christian Reformed Church. This number apparently increased significantly after the ceremony when refreshments were served. Rev. Ray Sikkema wrote about it too in the same issue of *Christian Renewal*.

Although the two articles enlarge too much on the protest, we must agree with the authors that it was in poor taste and in violation of the biblical way of dealing with the church and its decisions. For the two women to wear white carnations is an understandable personal statement. But for others to join in and turn it into a dramatic outcry for solidarity begs the question, what about solidarity with those who, like Wynia and Sikkema, believe that they must resist ordination of women to the office of elder and minister out of obedience to God?

Even if the solidarity was not so much with people as with a conviction, that still leaves us with a sour aftertaste. The matter of ordination of women is to be decided in a deliberative assembly that is fervently prayed for, not in a political demonstration over crumpets and tea.

BW

SKYLIGHTS/WILLIAM R. RANG



"I don't want my church to follow the national direction. We must pull up our Calvinistic socks, so to speak — unfortunately, some of us need to first relocate those socks."

Quo Vadis, Canada?

The "True North, Strong and Free" is in trouble. It is not too difficult to make an analysis of the present situation within our country. There is dishonesty in high places. The dominant institutions in our land can hardly be named humanistic anymore since they have changed so drastically over the last few decades. Now they may be labelled as secular, if not pagan. The moral fibre of the nation has mostly disintegrated. We live in an age of situation ethics that are largely based on the convenience principle.

What worries me is that a recent poll indicated that only a scant five per cent of the Canadian people admit to having a personal relationship with Christ. Suppose that our total population now stands at 25-million. That means that only slightly over one-million and a quarter of our people know the Lord.

One of the latest characteristics of Canadians is their strong criticism of everything American. Even in the so-called Christian press, we witness a dislike and a distrust of our southern neighbours. Yet, of their vast population of 232-million, a strong 23 per cent indicated a personal relationship with the Lord. In terms of numbers, this represents a whalloping 53-million, larger than twice the Canadian population.

One result of our rather negative approach to these neighbours is that we do not even know sufficiently well who their religious leaders are. Of course, everybody knows Billy Graham and by now everybody knows Jim Bakker. To my surprise not one of my students knew who Jerry Falwell was and not one of them had ever heard of the Moral Majority. How I wish we had one!

In fact, I wish we had one religious leader who had clout beyond the confines of the church!

What worries me most is that the one religious denomination that has the vision and the energy to change things around by the grace of God has become inwardly divided. Politically, its members range in and between the ultra-Conservatives and the NDP. Religiously, many find shelter behind the broad shoulders of others. Morally, they have let permissiveness invade their domain and its disastrous results become more and more visible.

I'm speaking of my church here.

I don't want my church to follow the national direction. We must pull up our Calvinistic socks, so to speak. Unfortunately, some of us need to, by the grace of God, first relocate those socks.

I'll stick to that opinion until someone can convince me otherwise.

William R. Rang is principal of the Christian School in Dunnville, Ontario.

Letters

Charismatics may stay CRC

Your feature article "Can we be Reformed and charismatic?" by John Kerssies of Ottawa CRC is of great interest to me.

The simple yet profound realization that the Holy Spirit is not a "sound" or "biblical" theological position nor even a Reformed or non-Reformed, biblical or un-biblical way of life, is refreshing. The Spirit is a living presence that will, when honoured and invited, express Himself in our corporate worship and our way of life individually and nationally.

Twenty-five years ago I left the Christian Reformed Church, not because of any fault I find today or did then, excepting only that God directed me to walk and understand a way that the church as a whole was not ready to embrace.

Your feature article encourages me greatly to believe that there may be a time when others like myself may not have to leave your circle of fellowship to have their thirst for God satisfied.

Rokus den Hartog,
Aylmer, Ontario

Longer Letter

Should CCG reflect majority of church members?

A letter from Mr. Bill van Oene, published in the Apr. 24, 1987, issue of *Calvinist Contact*, included a number of observations about the statement on capital punishment sent to federal MPs in Canada by the Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG). Much of what Mr. van Oene wrote has been conveyed to us by other people as well, and we would welcome the opportunity to address some of these concerns.

Mr. van Oene makes the point that the CCG statement was based on pragmatic arguments, and not "in terms of 'Thus says the Lord.'" Based on the article in *Calvinist Contact* to which he was responding, it is not difficult to understand why Mr. van Oene would reach this conclusion. I'm sure that Mr. Witvoet, who wrote the article, would be the first to admit that it was not his intention to suggest that CCG failed to articulate biblical grounds for the position against capital punishment. A news article cannot always be expected to cover every point.

In fact, the first half of the statement is devoted to CCG's understanding of various biblical passages, backed by the statement of the 1981 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. Our position paralleled that of synod in that we too acknowledge the *right* of modern states to practise capital punishment. What synod did not say was when this right should be exercised. CCG, in wanting to speak biblically to the current debate on capital punishment, sought to apply the synodical statement to the Canadian scene, and concluded that the *current* situation does not demand the need for the government to exercise that right. In so doing, CCG looked at practical arguments — not to determine whether capital punishment is right or wrong, but to see how the biblical givens could be applied in the present circumstances.

Correct procedure

Mr. van Oene also remarked that CCG sent an "unratified" statement to the MPs, "creating the impression that this report represents the opinion of the majority of the CRC." We would like to make it very clear that CCG followed correctly the procedure established by the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada for submitting statements to government between council sessions. Because the council meets once every other year and because national issues often must be addressed before it can meet, CCG has been instructed to get the approval of the Council Interim Committee (which meets every month) for making a particular submission if that submission takes a position which has not yet been formally dealt with by the council. CCG asked for and received this permission before sending the statement on capital punishment to the MPs. CCG also clearly identified the statement as coming from itself and not from the council.

The objection has been raised that, despite such a qualifier, the MPs would nevertheless think that the statement reflected a consensus of views of the members of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada. The suggestion here is that CCG should reflect the views of the majority of church-members; in effect, CCG should come to its conclusions by conducting polls. As CCG members, however, we have been mandated by the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada to address national issues on the basis of the scriptures, as understood in our Reformed tradition. If there are times when our statements go against the opinion of the majority of church members, then we should be criticized on biblical grounds, not for the fact that we do not speak for the majority.

To put it another way, CCG's mandate comes from the council, not directly from the members of the CRC. The members of the churches relate to CCG indirectly through their representatives to the council, delegated through the classes. In other words, CCG is *technically responsible* to the council, and is accountable to the council when there is disagreement with a statement CCG has made.

In touch with members

CCG does, however, feel a *moral responsibility* to the members of the CRC. We take very seriously the views of people outside the committee. For instance, a policeman, who is a member of one of the Christian Reformed churches in Ontario, echoed Mr. van Oene's objection to one of CCG's arguments against the reintroduction of the death penalty after he read about it in *Calvinist Contact*. The fact that fewer police officers lose their lives in their line of work than construction workers do is, he said, like comparing apples and oranges. Construction workers who die on the job are usually killed by accident, while police officers are often killed intentionally at the hands of other human beings. We agreed that this was a faulty argument, and dropped the paragraph from the final version of the statement.

The statement on capital punishment was drafted originally by a subcommittee of CCG, made up of people who, except for one, were not members of CCG. They did, however, have a keen interest in criminal justice issues. CCG has attempted to get names from consistories of people who may be interested in the other areas which we address; unfortunately, we have not received as many names as we would have liked. We are now working on

Continued on page 4 ...

Tackle box
WHERE IS OH OH ?
HUNTING I GUESS..
CATS; I DON'T THINK THEY ARE MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE. BUT I AM NOT SURE
THE EGYPTIANS WORSHIPPED THEM; BUT THEY ARE NOT MENTIONED AT ALL IN EXODUS.
HMM....WHY NO CATS IN ISRAEL ?
OH OH
NO KOSHER MICE ?

News

CLAC in Alberta keeps up the fight

... continued from page 1.
existence in the construction industry."

The Alberta office immediately went to work, activating "every contact we had." Letters were written to Reid, former Labour Minister Les Young, Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga, and Ernie Isley, Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services and all cabinet ministers. Young was "especially helpful," said Vanderlaan, and even "circulated a personal letter amongst his cabinet colleagues warning them of the impact *Bill 53* would have on CLAC."

Labour Minister Reid, after meeting with CLAC representatives, agreed to help too and, says Vanderlaan, "he mentioned he would like to see CLAC at the bargaining table, especially since [CLAC's multi-craft/trade] type of structure is the only viable structure for the 21st century." If it was not possible to guarantee CLAC a voice at the table, Reid promised to exempt CLAC from the decisions made at the table.

Reid tested the idea of giving CLAC representation with the other unions and employer organizations. "The unions were screaming blue murder and the employer organizations were ambivalent — some for and some against a fourth CLAC or independent table," said Vanderlaan. Eventually it became clear that representation would be impossible and CLAC was exempted from the bill, which was passed on June 15, one day late.

Looking back, Co Vanderlaan says, "John [Kolkman, CLAC representative,] and I again stand amazed at the fact that a seemingly innocent piece of legislation dropped on an entire industry and discussed for only one short week could have had a major influence on CLAC for years and years to come. On the one hand it could have swallowed [us]; on the other hand it could have made us a full partner and participant in the industry while protecting our uniqueness and independence ..."

Although thankful that the CLAC was protected from the legislation, Vanderlaan concedes, "the difficult thing to accept is that we came so tantalizingly close to a structure that would have given us the best of both worlds. It also shows us again that we constantly have to be on top of every seemingly insignificant piece of legislation."

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Gus Polman, Richard Vanderkloet, William van Geest

Meech Lake: turning point in Canadian history?

Richard Vanderkloet

Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the prime minister who so staunchly fought separatism in Quebec six short years ago is now predicting the collapse of the Canadian Confederation. He was referring to the Meech Lake accord signed on April 30 by the 10 provincial premiers and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. Was the accord such a bad deal? If so, why did Mulroney agree to it?

The main parts of the accord include an agreement to amend the Constitution in such a way as to grant recognition to Quebec as a "distinct society;" to give provincial governments the right to nominate Supreme Court justices and senators; and to give the provinces the right to opt out of any new federal programs and be given the money they would have received if they had opted in to the program.

I have no real objection to the recognition of Quebec as a distinct society. Every Canadian who has ever been to Quebec knows that it *is* a distinct society. They also recognize it to be one of Canada's most valuable characteristics that Quebec can exist within Canada as a distinct society. It is appropriate to recognize it as such in the Constitution and provide for the right of Quebec to promote and preserve its distinctiveness.

Decentralization

However, the other provisions of the accord are very bad. They will transfer substantial powers from the federal government to the provincial governments. The provinces will gain a major voice in the federal judiciary (the Supreme Court) and legislature (the Senate). This is a significant change in the rules of Canadian government. Until now Canadians have chosen provincial governments to enact and enforce laws dealing with those matters that the Constitution delegated to the provinces. And they have chosen a federal government to enact and enforce laws dealing with those matters that the Constitution delegated to Ottawa. Now, it appears, through their control over Senate and Supreme Court appointments, provincial governments will potentially have great powers to enact or prevent and interpret federal laws. This is a major step towards decentralizing the federal government and reducing it to a battlefield of rival provincial interests.

Equally bad was the provision of the accord that allows any province to withdraw from new federal programs without losing the federal monies that would have been spent if the province had not opted out. It reduces Ottawa to playing a kind of Santa Claus to provincial governments, who in turn dispense the money to (and receive the gratitude of) their citizens.

Pressure to clear image

Why then did Mulroney agree to such a bad deal? Mulroney had promised in the 1984 election campaign to "bring Quebec into the Constitution" of 1982. Mulroney has fared very badly in the polls for over a year and is widely regarded by Canadians as untrustworthy and incompetent. He is worried that he will succeed even better than Diefenbaker in losing the largest-ever Parliamentary majority in the shortest time. Mulroney wants to build a new image of success, integrity and competence. Thus, when he came to Meech Lake he had to come away with a deal. Failure to do so would be disastrous for his and the Conservative Party's future. Thus he bargained from a position of extreme weakness.

In fact, for the first time ever, the first ministers' conference at Meech Lake was not a bargaining session between federal and provincial leaders but a bargaining session between provincial leaders presided over by an anxious prime minister who could only bless whatever deal the premiers made between themselves. All the provincial leaders wanted to increase their powers at Ottawa's expense. Unfortunately, Quebec wouldn't agree unless it got recognition of its distinctiveness. The main point of contention between the premiers was this demand. In the end it was the pragmatic realization that the other powers could only be obtained in exchange for giving up to this demand that cemented the agreement.

Pierre Trudeau advised Canadians to "say goodbye to the dream of one Canada." Whether the Meech Lake agreement actually spawns the break-up of Canada is by no means certain yet. There are powerful bonds uniting this country that shouldn't be underestimated. Nevertheless, if the Canadian Confederation fails to survive the next 50 years I believe historians will look at the Meech Lake accord as the turning point in Canadian history.

Richard Vanderkloet teaches history at Toronto District Christian High School in Woodbridge, Ontario.

Should CCG reflect majority of church members?

... continued from page 3.
other ways to reach church members, and are hoping that our communications can be improved.

The concern that CCG not estrange itself from church members is a very serious one, and one that we are trying to deal with in a meaningful way. It is our sincere hope that we will be able to work together with the members of the CRC in speaking to government, rather than at cross-purposes. Bringing God's Word to national issues is not an easy task. It requires the scriptural commitment and spiritual discernment of all of us. We need the support of all church members, and especially their prayers for the Lord's guidance, to go on.

No clear requirement

Perhaps these remarks will also help to clarify a few points raised in the public exchange a short while ago between brothers Posthumus and Wolters. After lengthy and careful studies by a synodical committee, by our own criminal justice subcommittee and by CCG, and having considered a number of observations made by Christian Reformed church members, our conclusion was that scripture indeed allows capital punishment, but does not require it. Our subsequent decision to recommend that it should not be reintroduced at this time in Canada is consistent with the strongly pro-life position we expressed in our statement on abortion. Moreover, the most current information we were able to obtain did not suggest to us that the situation in Canada had reached a state of "last resort," used as a criterion for the execution of evildoers in the synodical statement.

If I may be allowed to make a personal observation by way of conclusion, I would suggest that we not become overly dogmatic in our discussions on this issue nor allow it to be a source of friction and division between us. In the absence of clear and unequivocal absolutes on the matter, prudence dictates a measure of reluctance and moderation. If, in time, CCG's recommendation is proven to be erroneous, I for one will take some comfort from the knowledge that we erred on the side of mercy and life.

Reinder J. Klein, Chairman,
Committee for Contact with the Government

New resources on Christians in the Soviet Union

WINNIPEG, Man. (MCC) — "Keeping Faith: Mennonites in the USSR" is the title of a new 15-minute slide/tape set that explains the setting in which Mennonites in the Soviet Union continue to practise their faith.

Photographs in the set, gathered in part by music/ministry delegations sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada in 1983 and 1986, chronicle the history of the "Mennonite remnant" in the Soviet Union and outline some of the challenges that currently face Mennonites in a variety of circumstances — including registered and unregistered churches, German-speaking Mennonite groups and Russian-speaking Baptist congregations.

The set is available for free loan through MCC Canada.

Also available for loan through MCC Canada is a 24-audio cassette series on "The Church Under Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe." The set is a recording of lectures given by Dr. Walter Sawatsky at the Wheaton College Institute of Soviet and East European Studies last July. It provides an historical and contemporary perspective on church-state relations in the Soviet bloc and prepares listeners for "informed participation with Soviet and East European Christians in evangelism." The series will be especially suitable for classroom and small group use.

Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

The struggle of the independent schools

I am not referring now to the high costs of operating a Christian school. That's a struggle all right -- not to be underestimated. But there is another struggle: the struggle for honest recognition. Our readers in Ontario especially, know of what I speak. Their schools do not get any financial support from the government, while, at the same time, these families are taxed for the public school system.

But even when our Christian schools do get government funding, as in Alberta and British Columbia, don't think that the struggle is over. Lots of people are screaming blue murder when funding of independent schools comes into discussion.

In British Columbia we do get partial funding from the government. This was a crown upon the work of FISA (Federation of Independent School Associations). This occurred in the time that W.A.C. Bennett was premier. He was against funding independent schools. Once, while I had him in my barber chair for a haircut, I asked him: Sir — when will this Social Credit government, in all fairness, fund independent schools? After all, these schools serve a public cause worthily.

I will never forget his answer. He jerked his head aside, put his hand on my arm, looked me straight in the face and said, "only over my dead body, my friend; I do not want a second Ireland in B.C.!" But gradually the influence of FISA was being felt; even to such an extent, that the next premier, NDP's Dave Barrett, apparently "smelled" the different air among the voters. His government introduced some token support, such as buses. Before this was implemented, the NDP was defeated. The premier's successor was Bill Bennett, son of W.A.C. Bennett!

Guess what one of the "planks" in his platform was during the election campaign? Funding of independent schools! I don't think he was one degree more in favour of this than his father was, but he "smelled the coffee!" The public "mind" had changed. He had to assure the many votes of people who had their own independent schools. The rate of support was set at 30 per cent of the operating costs of the public school in the same district as where a particular independent school was located. No funding was made available toward capital costs such as land and buildings.

Of course, a storm of protest was raised by the worshippers of the public school. If you would believe them, our entire entire education system would go to the dogs! Not to speak of the argument that supporting independent schools would sky-rocket the educational budget.

Well, the latest news is that the B.C. government has increased the percentage of support from 30 to 35 per cent, while the public school system got only an increase of four per cent. You can imagine what kind of storm this unleashed! Articles in the paper said: "Independent schools get 35 per cent and the public school only four per cent!" Of course, they forgot, conveniently, that the 35 per cent is being applied to the 30 per cent operating cost; while the four per cent is being applied to the full cost of a student in the public school.

Several weeks ago the press had an interview with the chairman of the Greater Victoria School Board. She stated that she was strongly against more funding of the independent schools, because, "the taxpayer should not be extra burdened to support those expensive 'private' schools." She claimed that the cost of a student in independent schools was close to $5,000, compared with $3,700 in the public school. When I read this, it got me riled! I wrote a "letter to the editor". It was placed two days later. I never have received so many phone calls in support as with that letter.

Meanwhile, there is a Royal Commission appointed by the government with the mandate to: "Look into all aspects of the public school system in the province." I think someone or some group should present a brief to that commission requesting consideration of the question, whether or not all schools should be made "independent." After all, educating children goes far behind the prerogatives of any government. It is the business of the parents.

Syrt Wolters works at "Central Barbers" in Victoria, British Columbia.

Religious objections OK in Alberta

Marguerite Witvoet

Alberta's new *Labour Code (Bill 60)*, replacing the current *Employment Standards Act* and the *Labour Relations Act*, brought some good news for Christians in the workplace. The act, introduced by Alberta Labour Minister Ian Reid on June 17, includes a strong and open religious objectors clause. The clause allows an employee to be exempt from forced membership in a union, and from payment of dues, fees or assessments to a union if he objects to these because of religious conviction or belief.

Instead, the employee may donate "amounts equal to any initiation fees, dues or other assessments" to a charitable organization mutually agreed upon by the employee and the trade union.

The fact that "religious conviction or belief" refers to both a church's position (e.g., Seven-Day Adventists) and an individual's personal beliefs makes Co Vanderlaan, director of the Christian Labour Association of Canada in Alberta, happy. "We are deeply grateful about this development," he says. "The clause is broad enough to include personal religious beliefs. We believe this is important since individuals could otherwise be rejected because fellow Christians of the same church did belong to a union or different unions. That is currently the case in Manitoba."

In addition, "there is no kick-in or time limit clause," says Vanderlaan, "which means that the provisions of the clause are available to all employees at any time."

Not all perfect

Apart from their overall positive reaction to the bill, CLAC has a few misgivings about certain areas. "We have already begun discussions on the whole issue of subcontracting clauses," says Vanderlaan. "Subcontracting clauses are at times ... used to force members of independent unions like the CLAC off construction sites because their members supposedly belong 'to the wrong union.'" These clauses are not prohibited in the new code.

"The issue of compulsory binding arbitration for private nursing homes is also ignored," Vanderlaan continues. "Private homes need to be put into the same framework as *public* nursing homes and other healthcare facilities. They were left out of legislation passed in 1983. As a result we ended up with a two-tier nursing home structure; the haves and have-nots (the public and the private)."

Vanderlaan believes "this change will be more difficult to get the government to move on than the subcontracting clauses, although that one won't be easy either."

MPs reject motion to protect the unborn

OTTAWA (MCC) — Earlier this month, with nearly half of the MPs absent, the House of Commons defeated a motion to protect the unborn.

Introduced by Gus Mitges last November, the motion sought to amend the Charter of Rights so that the section seven statement that "everyone has the right to life ..." would explicitly include the unborn.

If the motion had passed, it would have gone to a Parliamentary Committee for an exact formulation. It would then have needed approval by both the federal Parliament and several provinces. The procedural complexity for amending the Charter made success unlikely. However, the delays in dealing with the motion and the high number of absentees at the time of the vote indicate the uneasiness that MPs feel about this issue. The vote was 89 to 62.

Farm Debt Review Board needs compassionate image

OTTAWA, Ont. (CFFO) — The ability of Farm Debt Review Boards to develop a compassionate image may be limited by the legislation that created the Boards according to the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO).

A CFFO delegation appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture of the House of Commons in late May and warned legislators that the Farm Debt Review Boards are not developing a compassionate image.

"For farm families, financial disaster is a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Elbert van Donkersgoed, CFFO's Research & Policy Director, told the Members of Parliament. "For financial institutions, it is a routine to which they assign special staff who have at their fingertips professionals such as lawyers. The official structure of the Review Boards does not provide them with a mandate to balance this lopsided reality."

"Officially the Board's fieldmen are just there to collect data and suggest options for solutions," the Federation's prepared statement says. "But the farm families need more than this. Many need compassionate help to grasp the options they have. Many need help to present their case effectively. They need to feel that the Board is there for them."

The boards were established last year to help farmers in financial difficulty to restructure their debt.

The Federation wants farm families, whose enterprises are insolvent, to have an opportunity to buy their land back from the Farm Credit Corporation at current fair market values. At present FCC has a policy of considering 3-year leases with an option to buy back at the end of the lease.

"The Farm Credit Corporation is not yet flexible enough in the options it is willing to consider," Gary Sytsma told the legislators.

Sytsma is a member of CFFO's Executive Board and a panel member of the Ontario Farm Debt Review Board.

Personal contact is key to good economic and compassionate solutions for the farm families in financial distress according to the Federation.

Pat Daunt, a CFFO member and active farm family adviser for a number of provincial programs shared some of his experiences with the legislators.

"I need to be there for the farm family" he told the committee. "Sometimes I even need to cry with them."

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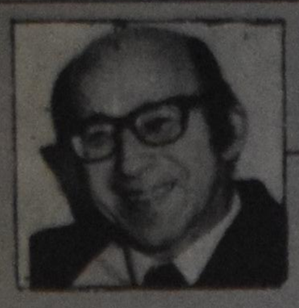


Pastoral letter

Leonard Schalkwyk

The gospel of prosperity

Recently a book appeared which in a balanced way evaluates the gospel of prosperity practised by several "faith preachers." The book was written by Bruce Barron and is called *The Health and Wealth Gospel*.

It especially zeroes in on the teachings of Kenneth Hagin, who has great influence by various means, not in the least by his Rhema Bible Course. Kenneth and Gloria Copeland's teachings are also quoted in depth from their "prosperity literature." They claim that we have come into "the blessings of Abraham" and, therefore, have a right to liberty from poverty.

Gloria Copeland explains the hundred-fold return on Christian service found in Mark 10:29,30 in a very literal way. She says that if we have enough faith, we can expect a return of $1,000 for every $10 given to their ministry.

Kenneth Copeland is just as emphatic in his book *The Laws of Prosperity*. He asks: "Do you want a hundred-fold return on your money?" Then "invest heavily in God and the returns are staggering: 100 to 1." That is a better percentage than any bank will ever offer you. Copeland points out that in the Old Testament, among the curses is listed, 'poverty' (Deuteronomy 28). We are redeemed from the curse by Jesus (Galatians 3:13) and, therefore, we are also redeemed from the curse of poverty.

Seen against the background of this "systematic theology of prosperity," one can understand that there is little or no guilt feeling among gospel workers who get very rich on the gifts of God's people. They simply get a good return. Moreover, the givers, also the "poor widows," if they have enough faith, will get a hundred per cent return on their money, which is better than they would have had with any investment.

One-sided

Of course, many Bible passages are left unmentioned. In fact, the Lord Jesus has more to say about the abuse of wealth than about the dangers of poverty. Moreover, the Lord Jesus is not a prime exhibit of this prosperity theology. Yet, who would suspect Jesus of having not enough faith to get rich? Peter, even after Pentecost, has to say — "silver and gold I do not have." (Acts 3:6) Yet, Peter was a spirit-filled Christian.

How would you apply this "prosperity theology" in the Third World, or in a Communist concentration camp? The explanation of this text from Mark is faulty, because it is more inspired by the environment of an affluent society than by a careful comparing of scripture with scripture.

Yet, in any error there is a hint to the truth. It is true that a believer — in general — is helped by his faith toward better economic conditions. He works harder than before and he tends to drop expensive sinful habits.

On my visits to Mexico, I was always impressed by the way the Christian Indians would better their conditions, by living by the Book.

When the Communists took over China, many Christians were among those who were summarily executed. The accusation against them was not religion, (that is stage two in a Communist take-over), but the charge was they had committed the unpardonable sin of being more prosperous than their fellow men.

Danger

It seems to me that the danger of error comes in when one makes a "system" out of *one* truth, which is taken out of context. Then the followers listen to tapes and study courses without checking it with the Bible. Their vision first becomes very narrow, then distorted. The people in Berea were of "more noble character," for "they examined the scriptures to see if what Paul said was true." Then many believed the truth. (Acts 17:11)

It can be spiritually enriching to fellowship with other Christians. But there are many "teachings" and "teachers" these days. Check the Bible to see whether what they say is according to the Spirit and Word of Jesus. Then you will not be led into confusion, but enriched by the Truth.

May the Lord grant you prosperity! Above all, may He make your soul to prosper.

Leonard Schalkwyk is pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Springdale, Ontario.

Study published on Reformed spirituality

GRAND RAPIDS, MI — The Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) Commission for Theological Education and Interchange (CTEI) has completed a study on "Reformed Spirituality." While acknowledging that there are divergent strands of spirituality among Reformed people themselves, the study assumes that there is historically a distinguishable Reformed view on spirituality. This the forum finds in John Calvin's motto, "promptly and sincerely I offer my heart to you, God." This attitude should permeate the whole of life and every pursuit. Every profession and means of livelihood is a "vocation" in which God has called us to full-time Kingdom service.

The study on Reformed spirituality draws on 12 contributions from 10 writers. In classical Reformed style it begins with a biblical exposition of the term spiritual. In neo-Reformed style it compares Reformed spirituality with other kinds: the early church, monasticism, the piety of the apostolate, mendicant spirituality, mystic spirituality, piety according to Calvin, Pietism, the Dutch Pietism of Nadere Reformatie, spirituality in the World Council of Churches, spirituality as transformation, and evangelical spirituality.

Although not a full spectrum of Reformed views on spirituality, the forum covers secularism's impact on the godly walk, an oriental (Japanese) perspective, a Javanese view, Filipino spirituality and two African perspectives, one black, the other white.

In a postscript the editor expresses the hope that the forum will lead the reader to a greater awareness of the holiness of God. "In other words, the fear of God, but then not a fear that drives on away from, but draws one to God, is the way the Bible expresses the true response to God's holiness.

"The holiness of God, if it is seen in biblical perspective, must lead us to see that God is both just and loving. If true spirituality leads us (as it should) to see God's holiness-in-justice, spirituality in itself should impel us to struggle for social justice. Seen in this light, social engagement is not contrary to spirituality but a direct consequence of it."

22,000 Hindus seek Christ

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA (Christian Aid Mission) — As many as 22,000 low-caste Hindus in India who once adamantly opposed Christianity are now seeking to become Christians, according to reports received by Christian Aid, a missionary organization that sends financial help to more than 300 indigenous mission groups worldwide.

An indigenous missionary leader in Delhi, who prefers to remain anonymous because of the potentially volatile situation, said that the leaders of a community of Hindu untouchables in northern India, after watching the native Christian missionaries in their area for 10 years, approached the missionaries and said they liked the kind of leadership they provided for their people and wanted to join their church.

The request took the missionaries by surprise, because this community of Hindus had adamantly opposed the preaching of the gospel in their area, even as recently as January, 1987. The missionaries consulted with their director in Delhi before any decision could be reached.

In order to accommodate the request, the missionary organization is planning five one-week Bible-teaching seminars in different locations for up to 300 seekers each. Then, the best students will be selected as potential leaders and given a 21-day course on evangelism before being returned to their own villages for sharing the gospel. The cost of each seminar will run $2,000 to $3,000, and the Christian leaders expect to see an immediate result of 2,000 real conversions this year. Though gifts are being sought to provide room, board and teaching materials, no material enducements will be given to those attending.

South Africa to host mission conference

DURBAN, South Africa (MNS) — Durban will be the site of an interdenominational, multi-racial conference in July to launch a three-week evangelistic campaign in unreached areas of southern African nations. An estimated 280 people groups in the southern part of Africa have not heard the gospel, and the conference, sponsored by Youth With a Mission (YWAM), hopes to mobilize 200 teams to reach them.

The Durban Go Festival, scheduled for June 25-July 3, will teach principles of evangelism.

IGUS to wait two years

The synod of 1987 decided to withhold accreditation to the Institute for Global Urban Studies (see C.C., June 5, 1987), "until this organization can establish itself as a factor in assisting Christian Reformed mission agencies." A study committee will look into the matter and report to the synod of 1989.

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Service change

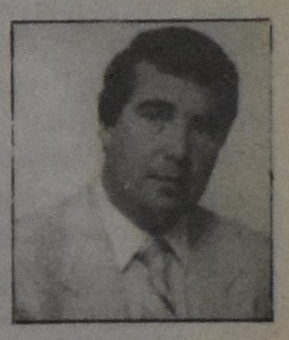
Due to the church being struck by lightning, Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Brampton, Ontario, will hold its worship services, from June 28 to Sept. 6, 1987, as follows: mornings, 11 a.m., in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; evenings, 7 p.m., in Second CRC, Brampton (Steeles Ave.).

Address change

Temporary change for Rev. Jac. Geuzebroek: 5 Vak-Lea Circle, Markham, ON L3P 3M6. Phone: (416) 479-0089.

Peter VanDyk

Tony Vanderhout



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Religion and Theology

Jewish sects in the New Testament period

With this first article, Calvinist Contact launches a religion and theology page by John Valk that will appear every other week. Valk believes that theological discussions have become matters reserved for the specialists. This, he wrote "is foreign actually to our first-generation immigrants." Valk wants "to bring that which is discussed in the universities and seminaries to the people, who form the backbone of our community."

John Valk

For any reader of New Testament history, it becomes apparent that the Jews were not a homogeneous people. Scholars have estimated that there may have existed as many as 24 different religious or political groups or sects. The New Testament records that Jesus and the apostles were confronted by some of these. Undoubtedly, encounters with others also took place.

The gospels speak mostly of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. We know of two other groups, the Essenes and the Zealots, who, though not mentioned in the New Testament, were known nonetheless. More are recorded by Josephus, the famous Jewish historian who has supplied us with invaluable historical detail for this period.

Being aware of these different groups or sects helps us gain a little better understanding of the religious and political atmosphere of the time. It allows us to explore the impact which the message of Jesus and the apostles had, and to discover who may possibly have been receptive to their "Good News." We know most definitely that their message held little sway with many. Yet, some of their teachings blended in with prevailing doctrine. This ought not to be surprising. After all, Jesus and the apostles were nurtured on Jewish religious soil.

What becomes most interesting is to explore the points of contact that existed, and to see whether these may have been stepping stones for later conversions. I propose to examine a number of these groups. I shall begin with the Sadducees.

The Sadducees

The Sadducees, closely linked to the monarchy and the Temple, formed the upper crust of Jewish society. They belonged to the upper tier of priests and wealthy land owners. Many had absorbed foreign ideas, yet many also retained an intense and aggressive nationalism. Their religious and political influence predominated in the high court and senate (Sanhedrin), but not generally among the common people.

Their wealth was at least partially connected with their function in the Temple. The Jerusalem Temple, the religious centre of Judaism, also had vital economic importance. It doubled as a "bank," where people not only paid their Temple dues, but also deposited their money. Due to its sacred status, it was naturally considered the safest place in Jerusalem and surrounding regions.

The Temple and the Temple cult was the domain of the Sadducees. Though perhaps not always directly in control, they certainly were associated with it, and with the chief rulers and power brokers of Jewish religious ritualism. They enjoyed a privileged status for many generations. Their power and influence came to an abrupt end with the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE.

Religious teachings

As true aristocrats, the Sadducees were conservative. They stood firm by the Torah, the law of God as revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five books of the Bible (Pentateuch). They tended to be inflexible in their understanding of the law, applying it in its original strictness and severity. They resisted any attempt at innovation through fanciful biblical exegesis in order to accommodate cultural, social and political

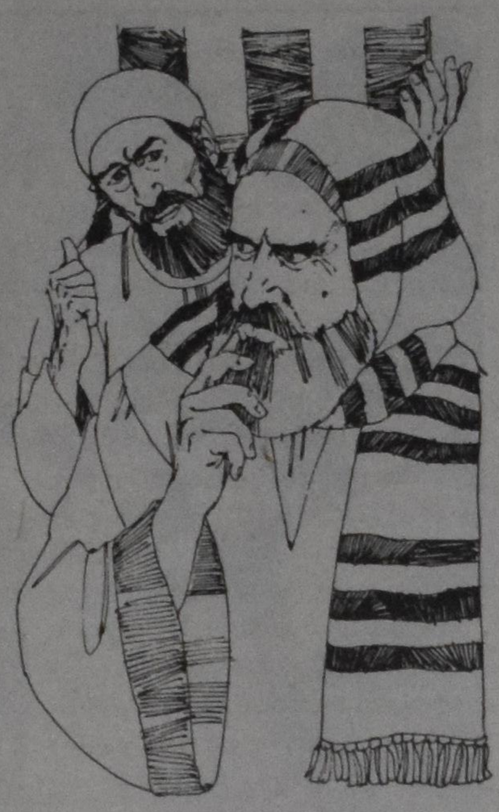

Photo: *Were You There?* by Tom Houston

Sadducees in the Sanhedrin prior to Christ's crucifixion.

changes. Here they disagreed with the Pharisees, who tried to interpret the ancient laws for the people in a time wrought with political and social turmoil.

According to their religious doctrines, the Sadducees felt that God was not much concerned with individual human activity, and that doing good or evil was very much one's own choice. They regarded God as a national God; Yahweh was the God of Israel, not of the whole world. They embraced, often literally, the written Torah, but felt it could serve only as a basic constitution of the state. Further application was virtually impossible because changing conditions often meant close relations with heathen nations.

In contrast to the Pharisees, the Sadducees rejected the "tradition of the fathers," those orally transmitted pronouncements of prophetic voices of the past. They did not believe in resurrection, nor in reward or punishment after death. Hence, they identified little with the Messianic hope.

Sadducee-Christian polemic

The doctrines and practices of the Sadducees, as mentioned in Josephus, come to the fore also in the New Testament. The gospel of Mark speaks of them only once. In that episode they try to corner Jesus on the question of resurrection and levirate marriage. He, a step ahead, beats them at their own game by basing the notion of resurrection solidly in the Pentateuch, the only scripture they accepted as authoritative. (Mark 12:8-27)

John the Baptist called them, along with the Pharisees, a "brood of vipers." (Matt. 3:7) He laid his finger on the inadequacy of their teachings, when they assumed that baptism might serve as part of their Temple ritualism, proving sufficient passport to heaven. Jesus as well cautioned the disciples to beware of their teachings. (Matt. 16:1-12)

It is very likely that the money-changers and those selling pigeons in the Temple can be linked to the Sadducees. (Matt. 21:12-13) As Temple "bankers," the Sadducees changed foreign coins and sold pigeons so that Temple dues might be paid and offerings given. Often a high profit was generated, sometimes just short of extortion. This disturbed Jesus greatly. But, Jesus' drastic action also disturbed the chief priests and scribes, whose way of life had suddenly been confronted and condemned. (Luke 19:47)

When the apostles continued to preach Jesus' message, they became a political nuisance and menace to the Sadducees, more so than a threat to their religion. They thought that this new sect had been eliminated with the execution of its charismatic leader. The Sadducees, which Luke links to the high priestly party in the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:17), were certainly aware that this new messianic movement, if it proved to be political, might be looked upon with disfavour by the Romans, and, therefore, provoke a military solution. That might have potentially threatened their own position of power.

Significant in Luke's account is the fact that the Sadducees, more so than the Pharisees, objected most to the teachings of the apostles. The point of contention was the resurrection of Jesus. (Acts 4:2) Paul also had his confrontations with them on this point. When he appeared before the Sanhedrin, he opposed them regarding resurrection, hope in the future, angels and spirit life. Interestingly enough, here Paul identifies with and claims to be a Pharisee. (Acts 23:6-9)

Conversions?

Clearly differences existed between the Sadducees and the apostles. But, might the apostles' teachings have had any appeal among them? Social differences existed, but their message would surely have been able to penetrate those. More crucial were differences of doctrine. Paul made it clear that it was possible to become a Christian without ceasing to be a Pharisee. Not so clear, however, was the possibility of becoming a Christian without ceasing to be a Sadducee.

John Valk is a Ph.D. candidate in the Centre for Religious Studies at the University of Toronto.

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Feature

Music and ministry mixes well

British rock musician-turned- priest runs Anglican camp

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth

AYER'S CLIFF, Que. — From music to ministry is not quite an accurate summation of Nick Brotherwood's life. He may be an Anglican priest, but the "Rock 'n Roll" of his past is still a part of his present.

Photo: *Sherbrooke Records*

Nick Brotherhood and son Matthew send a group of young people off on a sleigh ride at Quebec Lodge. (Photo was taken last winter)

Last September he left his cultural and musical roots in England to become director of Quebec Lodge, a Christian camp on the shores of Lake Massawippi in the eastern townships, run by the Anglican Church of Canada.

The camp still affords him and his wife, Sue, (a dancer and a dance instructor) with opportunities to incorporate their musical background. The 37-year-old drummer says his involvement with such groups as Mighty Flyers, Dave Reese, Screw and the Christian group, After the Fire, provides "a point of contact" with campers, many of whom are under 20. (The Brotherwoods also organize special arts camps at the lodge.)

"A lot of people are into rock music today. When they know about my rock background I become more accessible to them," says Brotherwood. "They see that Christianity is not just for people like their grandmother" but also for those who enjoy rock and roll.

Rock to God and rock

Brotherwood became a drummer at 18. By age 20 he was touring with his band in Spain. He had rejected the religious teachings of his family and Sunday school, but began to study the New Testament. "I started believing that what Jesus was saying was true," says the Anglican priest. "My first reaction was to get out of rock and roll."

Then he met a Christian songwriter. "He wrote songs like I'd never heard before. They weren't the ram-it-down-your-throat type of gospel songs."

Soon Brotherwood joined the British Christian group After the Fire, who made it to the top five of the pop charts in 1983 with their song, "Der Kommisar." Brotherwood had left the band before the chart-making song was recorded, and "ironically, the group split before the song made it to the number five position." He says the group always attempted to express a Christian world view.

Following God's call

After leaving the group, Brotherwood felt God calling him to the ministry. He studied for three years at Oakhill theological college in north London.

"It's a scary transition into the priesthood. Some of my music peers told me it was a cop out, but some said, at last there's someone out there who knows what we have been through because he has been there."

After graduating, he went to work at an inner-city church in Nottingham were 50 per cent of the church population was under the age of 30. He saw punk rockers kneeling down to take communion with the elderly ladies. The experience was "fantastic."

"I know what it feels like to be an outsider. Jesus was always bringing in outsiders to become His family. We must be careful not to make it our club — it's Jesus' family," says Brotherwood.

Over the years, the Brotherwoods and their four children (ages two to 11) have worked in various camps in Canada, but have always gone back to England. Although at first hesitant to accept a call to Quebec Lodge, "we were encouraged by the people we met and were interested in the idea of [the camp] as a centre for renewal."

The Brotherwoods postponed their decision to come to Canada because Sue's father was dying of cancer and the family wanted to be with him. The job was held open for them and they arrived last September. They find rural living "quite a change" from their life in the hub-bub of London, England, but are committed to their three-year term in Canada.

Music indicates lifestyle

Still a rock fan (he enjoys Glass Tiger and the Pointer Sisters), Brotherhood has strong views about discernment which he promotes among young people and others at the camp.

"We talk [to teens at the camp] about the nature of listening and try to have them evaluate what they hear. We constantly ask, 'Is what is being performed consistent with a Christian stance?' Music is not just music, but it is also a lifestyle," says Brotherhood.

Musical discernment must be a part of all music listening, he says. "The church has been lax in evaluating other forms of music such as easy listening, and has jumped on rock and roll because it is more upfront" in promoting lifestyle. Brotherhood cites, for example, the popular easy listening tune "My Way" as completely anti-Christian in its message.

"People have to learn not to judge music solely by their cultural standards," stresses Brotherwood. Just because you don't like certain types of music doesn't mean they're not Christian. And just because you enjoy a certain style of music doesn't mean it is

Continued on opposite page...

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Christian."

Flabby Christian music

Brotherwood points out that just because a song is labelled Christian, doesn't mean it needs no critique. Although his experience is mostly with the British Christian rock scene, he stresses that all Christian rock musicians "need to make a major priority of working on their musical standards and to spend more time thinking through their Christianity.

"In trying to gain acceptance, there is a tendency by some [Christian rock and roll artists] to not think about what they are performing. Their Christian rock and roll gets flabby in its theology."

Brotherwood expresses concern that Christian rock could become a sub-culture if Christian thinking is not made a priority. He thinks this music has the potential to become a strong cultural influence. U2 is an example, he says, of good musicians with good application.

Christian music functions on two levels, according to Brotherwood: Christian music presented to the secular world — the type he and groups such as U2 are involved with — and Christian music for the Christian community. Both are "healthy" he says, but the latter must be careful "not to become self-indulgent."

The church needs to become interested, once again, in music and other forms of the arts, Brotherwood says.

"Until the 19th century the church was a great patron of the arts but church-going has moved from a social event to an option. There are those who have remained defensive, even inward-looking.

"The church has to provide an accessible form of worship so people coming in off the streets can understand it." Culture never stops changing, he says.

Integrated approach

The ministry of the Brotherwoods at the 68-hectare Quebec Lodge, is a team effort. Married for 12 years, Brotherwood says Sue has a strong role in the running of the camp. "Much of the style of the operation can be attributed to her," he says. Sue helps design and teach dance programs as well as helping develop other programs. The Brotherwoods hope to incorporate fitness trails, cross-country skiing and windsurfing at the camp.

The Brotherwoods want Quebec Lodge to be a place where "people not only think about Christianity, but live it as well. We promote strong Christian teaching and provide worship services, Bible studies and quiet times. We believe in an integrated approach: teach by what you say and what you do," says Brotherwood.

Currently, the camp is gearing up for various young people's camps, including two senior and two junior co-ed camps as well as an arts camp (which they personally designed) and an adventure week. The young people will be from all over Quebec and from many different denominations. Many will be francophone, but all instruction will be in English. "Many French people want their children to attend a camp where they can improve their English. However, we will provide the campers with French New Testaments," says Brotherwood.

The Brotherwoods do not know if they will stay in Canada when their term is finished at Quebec Lodge. They are sure that God will direct them once again, and they "are open to what He wants."

Who speaks for whom?

Douglas Fisher

One of the oldest tricks in Canadian politics is a ploy used by an interest group or association to magnify its backing. What continues to surprise me is the readiness of our politicians and press to take such assertions at face value.

Read this from a letter to me from Patricia Thompson of Brighton:

"A while ago my husband asked me if I knew I was a supporter of NAC (National Action Committee on the Status of Women) by virtue of being a member of the Anglican Church Women (ACW). I had never heard of the NAC let alone knew I was a supporter. I put the same question to our local church group and they didn't know either. The local group checked with the Toronto diocesan executive of the ACW and they weren't sure. It was only when the diocesan executive of the ACW checked with the national executive of the ACW that they learned that 'yes' the ACW supports the NAC.

"Our daughter, who is a teacher, said the teachers' federation as a group supports the NAC but a great many individual teachers do not.

"It would seem to me the NAC support consists of large women's groups, the vast majority of whose members have no idea that they are its supporters. In my opinion, NAC's claim to represent four-million women has to be shown up as a gross misrepresentation. The number of women who actually know and support the NAC could well be 10,000 or less, which is the same number of women who belong to and actively support REAL Women."

Grand-sounding associations abound in these times of rampant photo opportunities, picketing for TV exposure, and seminars, conferences and press releases galore. Who does speak for whom?

Reprinted excerpt from The Toronto Sun, June 10, 1987.

How's that again?

If the metric system of measurement is adopted by the United States, perhaps some of the favourite sayings will have to be changed thus:

- Peter Piper picked 8.81 litres of pickled peppers.
- It hit me like 907 kilograms of bricks.
- A miss is as good as 1.609 kilometres.
- A decigram of salt.
- Beat him within 2.54 centimetres of his life.
- All wool and 91.4 centimetres wide.
- Give them 2.54 centimetres and they take 1.609 kilometres.

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Features

The appeal of Laura Smit

Marguerite Witvoet

"Things do change." Laura Smit probably knows that better than anyone else. Five years ago, if she had brought an appeal before the synod of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) to be allowed to apply for candidacy for the ministry, she would have been laughed out of the assembly and told to mind her own (woman's) business. This year, however, when Laura came forward with the same appeal, she was given permission to speak from the floor, was congratulated on her courage and received a standing ovation.

All was not tea and roses, however. It took some time for synod to come to an agreement that they should even consider Smit's appeal. Smit, who graduated from Calvin Theological Seminary in May, 1987, was considered outstanding and gifted by some of her teachers. But this year's Board of Trustees informed her that, since the CRC does not ordain women as ministers, she would not be assigned a sermon text or be allowed to go through the process of application for candidacy in the CRC.

Smit claimed in her written appeal that the board had overstepped its limits of authority by refusing to recommend or not recommend her application to synod. By now even considering her application, she wrote, "the board has prejudged the mind of synod" and "violated my right of access to synod .... Only synod may declare candidates," she continued; "the board merely recommends or refuses to recommend." In addition, she noted, synod has previously made exceptions to its own rules for candidacy.

Discussing to discuss

Delegates were wary about renewing the women-in-office controversy, and spent some time discussing whether to open the case before synod. Finally, President Calvin Bolt reminded delegates that by discussing whether or not the appeal should be discussed, synod *was already* discussing the appeal. "If we're going to discuss it, let's discuss it. I don't want to spend an hour on whether it's legally before synod, and 15 minutes on the matter itself." Synod agreed and gave Smit the privilege of the floor during the consideration of her appeal.

Smit made it clear from the start that the issue before synod was not whether women should be allowed in office, but whether due process had been granted in the way the board had dealt with her case. "The point of my appeal is that I have been denied access to synod," she said. "The decision does not have to be split over the issue of women in office." She said she was told by the board that it was "fruitless, futile and hopeless" for her application to be processed. "That's a very pragmatic way to make decisions. These decisions should not be made in a pragmatic way. I would hope that it would never be fruitless or futile for someone ... to have a ruling on their candidacy."

Recognize the person

"I am not naive," Smit said, explaining that she knew her candidacy could not be approved. But, she continued, allowing her to *apply* for candidacy would not be equivalent to *recommending* her for candidacy. "If I would have been assigned a sermon text and been evaluated on my sermon, I still would have been recognized as an applicant, not necessarily with the recommendation of becoming a candidate."

Smit pointed out that she was not rebelling against the CRC; rather, it was "loyalty to the denomination" that caused her to confront synod. Instead of walking away from the problem, she felt she "had no choice" but to deal with it face on. "It *is* painful to watch the body of Christ be torn apart. But that pain has to be confronted. Our first task is not to avoid controversy and confrontation."

Another reason for presenting her appeal was to force synod to deal with the matter of women in office in a real and personal way, instead of in abstract terms. When synod decides to say no to women candidates, Smit said, "I want you to look at *me* when you say it. I want you to know that when you say no to women in office and to women candidates, you say no to a *person*!"

Strong commitment

Response from the delegates varied. Most thought Smit's presence was a "good thing," but not all agreed with her appeal. Several felt that since women are not allowed to be candidates, application would be senseless. Other delegates thought that women should be evaluated on a final sermon, and allowed to apply for candidacy. That way, said Rev. J. Vos of Classis Niagara, "it would be clear that there is one reason and one reason only she was denied candidacy, and that would be on the basis of her sex." Another delegate agreed — she would at least know she had the ability, even if she did not have the possibility.

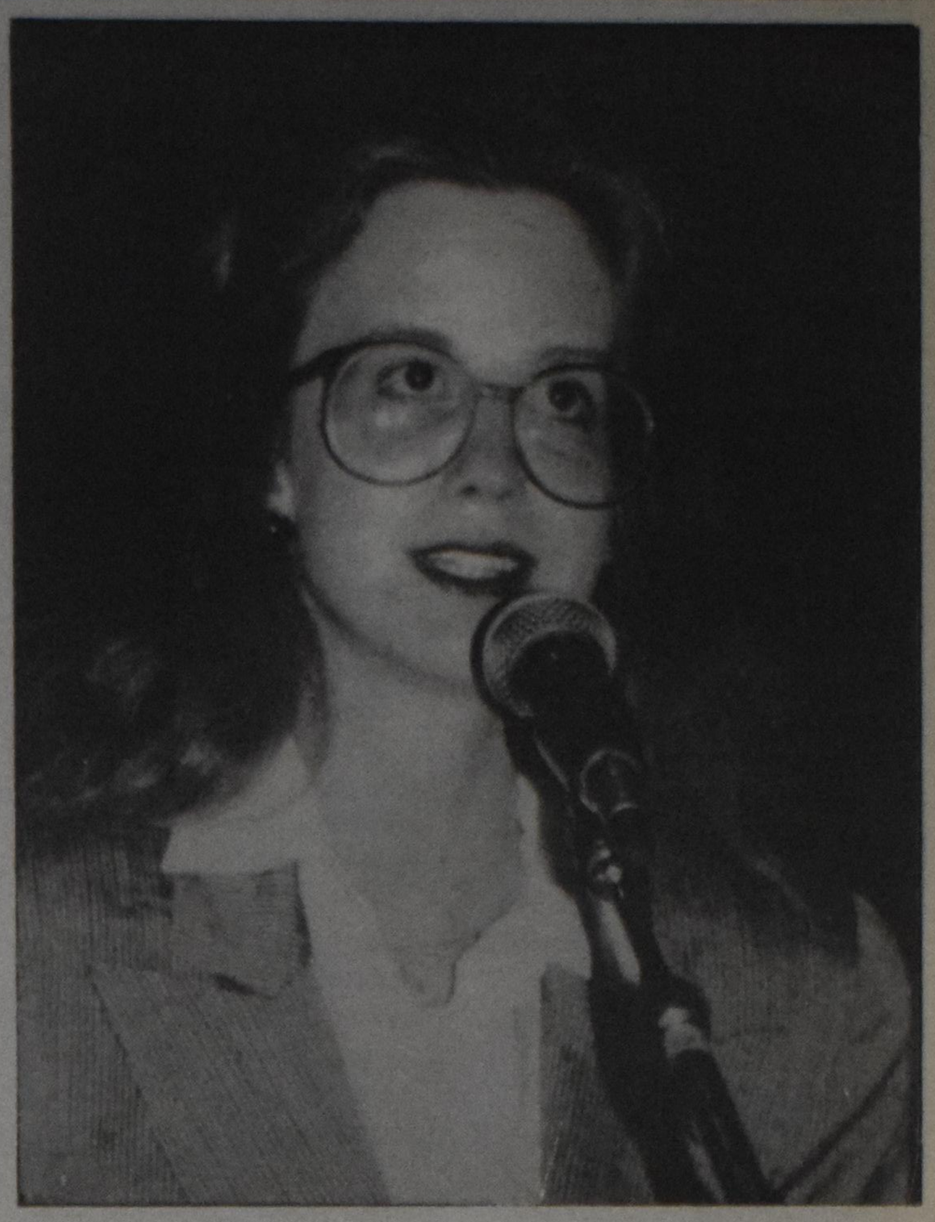
Almost all commented on Smit's courage, and were impressed by her strong commitment to the divine call. Rev. Tymen E. Hofman of Classis Chicago South said that, upon seeing her, he could not imagine that there was "anything else than a good spirit, than the Holy Spirit in Laura." Another delegate who talked to Smit after the proceedings, said that he had planned to vote against her appeal, but "when I saw you there, I just couldn't do it."

Synod rejected Smit's appeal by a vote of 112-50, 22 delegates registering their negative votes in the minutes. President Bolt commended Smit on her presentation, saying "you have conducted yourself in a Christ-like way." However disappointing this decision may be to her, he said, "remember — the CRC has not yet walked away. We will continue to talk, and that shows love."

Sees hope

When asked later how she felt, Smit said she was positive about what had happened. "I am profoundly grateful that I got to be there, and that synod was open enough to the issue to allow me to talk," she said. "I take that as a sign that there is hope for this church, because we can talk to each other across our differences, and we are not showing signs of fear .... The comments that I heard, even the negative comments, were given in a very constructive spirit, I think, and [in] a sincere effort to do the Lord's will for the church."

However, she admitted feeling "a little let down," and said that she would consider leaving the denomination for one where she would be allowed to preach. She would prefer to stay in the CRC, but says it has "just about come to" the point where she will be forced to leave. "I believe the Holy Spirit is telling me that I should be a pastor."



This lady knows her stuff! Photo: Marguerite Witvoet

During the Laura Smit appeal, Rev. Tymen Hofman expressed the opinion that it may only be a matter of time before the CRC accepts women as ministers. "Maybe in 10 years, Laura will be called back to the CRC," he said. Then, thinking of her demonstrated knowledge of procedural matters in her appeal, he commented, "If she is, she will probably be called to serve as professor of church order!"

Too late for CRC

MW

In addition to her appeal to synod, Laura Smit also submitted "a petition containing a written statement of formal charges against the Board of Trustees (of Calvin College and Seminary) invoking the procedures of the Judicial Code for hearing these charges," synod was informed. This would be the last avenue open to Smit to have her appeal sustained. Immediately after her appearance at synod, Smit remained hopeful: "It has happened before that a decision has been made through a case study rather than by synodical decision," she said. But since the writing of this article, *Calvinist Contact* has learned that Laura Smit has accepted a call to a Presbyterian church in Buffalo, New York.

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LEADERSHIP — to serve; not to be served

Ed Vanderkloet

When a company screens applicants for a certain job or a school interviews teachers for a particular position, the first thing they do is determine whether the applicant has the required qualifications for the job. We do our best to fill these positions with people whom we think have the necessary wisdom, knowledge, insight and faith.

Strangely, there is one human characteristic that ought to rank high on the list of criteria for appointments that is often overlooked or ignored altogether. It is the talent of leadership. If it is considered at all, the company or board involved frequently has a wrong notion of what true leadership is about.

Leadership qualities are often thought of as the ability to give orders, to dominate, to infallibly point the way, to be completely knowledgeable on all aspects of the company, the school, or whatever organization the person is in charge of. In such a view, the authoritarian approach is hailed as a mark of true leadership. How wrong and destructive this view is becomes clear if we carefully watch the performance of some companies, school boards and even consistories.

Let me give an example.

Fine Christian, poor leader

Some years ago, in my function as a CLAC (Christian Labour Association of Canada) representative, I made monthly visits to a city in northern Ontario where the CLAC represented two construction crews, each consisting of about 25 plumbers, steamfitters and welders who all worked on a large industrial project. The crews belonged to two different companies and each worked under a foreman.

It became obvious during our regular membership meetings that virtually all the complaints and grievances came from one crew and that most of them centred on the foreman. For quite a while this baffled me since I knew the foreman rather well and knew him to be a gentleman as well as a sincere Christian. I simply could not understand why he generated so much resentment, and for some time I blamed the unhealthy situation on the fact that he had had the bad luck of having to supervise a poor crew.

In the long run, however, this explanation did not satisfy. I discovered that the foreman in question, although a person of many virtues, could not give proper leadership. He nurtured the mistaken notion that his authority had to be displayed in the form of close supervision and detailed knowledge of what everyone was doing. In fact, he repeatedly snooped on his people. Also, his instructions were usually vague, and when under stress he easily blew his stack and started acting like a drill sergeant.

His attitude bred resentment and led to an endless series of conflicts, disputes and poor performance. Some workers actually sabotaged the work. The foreman of the other crew, although his personal lifestyle left a lot to be desired, intuitively knew how to handle a group of pretty rough characters. He always consulted with the workers on how a job had to be tackled, he never barked orders, never stuck his nose into matters that were not his own, interfering only when it was necessary. The result was that his men performed like clockwork and complaints were few. Even when someone filed a grievance, he knew how to listen calmly and how to solve the problem in fairness.

This situation, which took place about 12 years ago, has made me think more deeply about that peculiar quality of leadership and has made me wonder why, especially in Christian circles, these talents are so often underrated or misunderstood.

Do not exasperate

I have concluded that part of the reason lies in a misreading of what the Bible says about these matters. I'm particularly thinking of the well-known passage in Ephesians 6 in which the apostle Paul admonishes children to obey their parents in the Lord, and slaves to obey their earthly masters with respect. From these two texts we have derived a type of absolute authority structure, and we have tended to ignore that in the very same passage Paul says, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children," and "masters, treat your slaves in the same way [i.e., as if you were serving the Lord, not men], and do not threaten them ..."

It is the element of lording it over others (and in the process exasperating them) that is so destructive of genuine work communities in many companies but also in not a few Christian schools, organizations and institutions. We all agree that there must be authority in these structures, but we sometimes don't understand what authority is for and what it is all about. Too often we think it has something to do with being the boss, one who has to be obeyed no matter what.

This misconception reveals itself in many relationships between school boards and teachers. I could cite several examples of teachers in Christian schools who were summarily dismissed by their board on spurious grounds or with no reasons given at all, and without being offered an opportunity to appeal their cause to an outside arbitrator or tribunal. Even more often it happens that during "negotiations" for new wages, board members ignore or bluntly reject the wishes and suggestions of the staff and ultimately dictate what next year's working conditions will be. This is often done on the basis of "we are the boss and we will decide."

Such an attitude does not reflect authority but authoritarianism. It flies in the face of the Pauline admonition that Christians amongst themselves should settle their disputes by calling on a "wise man" within the community who can adjudicate such matters. I personally know of cases where the mere suggestion that a mutually acceptable person be appointed as arbitrator to hear both parties and to rule on the dispute as fairly as possible was rejected by board members with the argument that going such a route would be tantamount to an abdication of authority.

I am not at all suggesting that teachers are always right and that school boards are always wrong in these disputes. Nor am I denying that there are many examples of good relationships between boards and teachers, and of situations in which both sides display the necessary love, wisdom and insight. Just the same, I think we all know of ugly and painful confrontations that are a dishonour to the Christian community.

I have noticed the same intolerant and dictatorial attitude in certain administration committees when it came to determining the remuneration of ministers and particularly of caretakers of the church. Too often one encounters an attitude of, "If he doesn't want to do it for that money, we'll gladly give the job to someone else."

The art of delegating

Another, more subtle, form of wrong leadership is the attitude of managers, supervisors, foremen, school principals, and college presidents who, with the best of intentions, try to be so completely in charge that they cannot delegate authority. One of the critically important features of authority is the power to delegate. The best person in charge is he or she who delegates most of his or her duties to others and *trusts* those others to do their jobs well without constantly looking over their shoulders.

I know of a former persident of a Christian institution who displayed much wisdom and understanding and whose personality was exemplary. Yet, he had great difficulty delegating tasks, and frequently checked up on details for which others were responsible. He even inquired of his assistant whether she had properly looked after the coffee and the cake for the upcoming board meeting. The man did not realize how annoying this habit was.

Truly good leadership means implicit trust in those under authority that they will do their job right. Meddling in details of which others are in charge is destructive of good relations and good leadership.

H. van Riessen, in his book *The Society of the Future*, states that the very purpose of authority is to delegate authority to others, and to wield the power of authority only when it is absolutely necessary. In fact, the less that is necessary the more it is a sign of successful authority, says van Riessen.

It is unfortunate that so many people who have been placed in positions of leadership believe that they must constantly issue a stream of commands, orders or directives to their subordinates. There are office managers who tolerate no freedom on the part of those under them. They constantly meddle in their staff members' *own* sphere of authority and competence, thus taking the pleasure out of others' work. I know of one such person who almost daily told his bookkeeper how certain entries had to be made and where funds had to be allocated. Little was left to the good judgment of the bookkeeper.

One finds similar situations in churches when, for example, consistory members cannot delegate authority to members of the administration committee and, sometimes in

Continued on page 12 ...

Photo: *Living and Learning*

"The best person in charge is he or she who delegates most of his or her duties to others and trusts those others to do their jobs without constantly looking over their shoulders.

LEADERSHIP — to serve; not to be served

... continued from page 11.
an autocratic way, tell the committee members what they must do. They do this on the mistaken notion that they possess "divine" authority in such matters, and are called to regulate almost all the details pertaining to the running of the church. (That explains, at least partly, why consistory meetings are often such drawn-out affairs.)

People who act this way, perhaps unwittingly adhere to the *Fuehrerprinzip*, the "inerrant" leadership principle that was so much in vogue in Hitler's Germany. True leadership, however, contains a large degree of trust in others, as well as humility when it comes to one's own capacities and insights.

Sensitivity to others

How can we become more discerning in choosing and appointing people in places of leadership who have the required talents for such positions? That is indeed a difficult question. These qualities can be learned, but only to some extent. The unfortunate part is that we have put in charge eminently qualified people who lack that one ingredient, namely to give good leadership. These are usually not obnoxious people; in fact, most of them are quite capable and likeable men and women. You simply can't get mad at them for long. But if you suggest to them that they do it all wrong when it comes to exercising leadership, they become upset. They fail to recognize their own shortcomings in this area. And without that recognition it is exceedingly difficult to make them mend their ways and improve their leadership skills.

To give leadership and to wield authority one needs to possess a finely tuned sense of who and where the other person is. One must be able to crawl into the skin of the other person, so to speak, and be very sensitive to his or her feelings. That requires much effort, but it is an indispensable part of giving leadership. Needless to say, even the best efforts are not always successful.

Some readers may suspect that I am basically opposed to the exercise of authority. That is not so. One of my cherished examples is the answer Margaret Thatcher gave to Barbara Frum a few years ago during an interview on *The Journal*. When Frum somewhat sarcastically asked the British Prime Minister why she was known as "the Iron Lady," Thatcher replied, "If you are called to govern, Mrs. Frum, a touch of iron is indispensable."

Indeed, leadership must be real and decisive. When things threaten to go wrong it should even be forceful. The lack of clearly understood authority can prove disastrous, especially in times of crisis. But that does not at all nullify the need for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of one's coworkers and for constantly promoting genuine teamwork.

The way I see it, the truly successful manager or leader is not an overly busy person. Instead, he has divided the work load among subordinates. All the leader has to do is ensure that the others perform well, and to do so with a minimum of interference.

In their best-seller *In Search of Excellence*, authors Peters and Waterman cite a number of the most efficient companies in the United States and Canada. In their opinion (which I believe is a correct one) the persons in charge of such corporations have as their primary duty to see to it that the "principles" of the company are kept safe. They never meddle in the affairs of their subordinates. They constantly encourage the taking of initiative, and they give the people under them a degree of independence that is unheard of in enterprises run on the conventional do-as-I-tell-you principle. Significantly, these truly successful firms display an extraordinary concern for the happiness and satisfaction of their employees and customers.

Genuine leadership demands a high degree of tact and diplomacy. Chewing out a subordinate in the presence of others is a terrible insult to the recipient of such discipline. It breeds resentment, not only in the person at the receiving end of the treatment, but also among all others within earshot. Also, good leadership demands that subordinates be given visible tokens of genuine appreciation for work well done. I don't mean frequent and profuse words of praise in the presence of others (which often breeds envy and resentment) but occasional, unobtrusive indications that an employee's good work has been noticed and is appreciated.

It is no coincidence that poor managers are usually poor listeners. Since they feel in charge of the business (or school or institution), they believe that they must know all or most of the answers to all the problems. Consequently, they are impatient when it comes to listening to what others think. I know of managers who are so intent on showing their leadership that they have the irritating habit of presenting well-worked-out plans at board meetings without any prior consultation and before anyone else has had the chance to think things over. As a result, such plans are often adopted because no one could quickly come up with viable alternatives. But such a style of leadership creates vexation or leaves a sense of frustration among the co-workers. They feel bypassed and manipulated as indeed they are.

The purpose of leadership

Obviously, the exercise of authority takes on different forms in different structures. The nature of army life requires more obedience to orders than is the case in a corporation, although trust, team work and collegiality in the military are as indispensable as in civilian life. Authority in the school is quite different from that in the state, and authority in the family is hardly comparable to that in the church.

But there is one feature they all have in common, namely its purpose. It was stated by Him who possesses absolute authority in heaven and on earth when He said to His disciples, "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve."

Ed Vanderkloet is Executive Secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

Vanwoudenberg in Nova Scotia

Anne Hutten

The Christian Heritage Party, in the shape of Ed Vanwoudenberg, favours the sanctity of life, compassion for the underprivileged and the sanctity of marriage. He wants to turn Canadian society back to its Christian roots, to a time when people shared good and healthy morals.

And judging by the response of some 80 people who heard him in Wolfville, N.S., on May 25, they too would like to see an end to crooked politicians, widespread divorce rates and teenage suicide. Whether Vanwoudenberg's approach will result in a viable alternative on the political ballot is another question.

The trouble with the Christian Heritage Party's views, as enunciated by Vanwoudenberg, is that there's so much truth in them. We do have a lot of immorality. Homosexuals across the country are demanding the right to adopt children, the right to equal medical and pension benefits for their partners. We have groups advocating euthanasia of seriously deformed infants. We have a terribly high national debt that will cripple our children's futures. And very few of our politicians give much weight to biblical arguments in favour of a day of rest.

So why not go with the Christian Heritage Party (CHP)? Maybe Vanwoudenberg and his supporters can shake up the existing system by running candidates in the next election, and by airing the Christian basis for their views. Certainly it's high time that Christians did more than complain about the state of the nation.

As a group, we tend to go along with the status quo, careful not to ruin our image, not to seem radical or fanatic. Jesus was a radical who shattered the sacred icons of His time, and timidity does not become His followers.

Lack of balance

Despite this, it's difficult to entirely support the CHP's approach. Why? Because there's an element of unfairness, a lack of balance, in the arguments that Vanwoudenberg presents.

Example: He quotes NDP leader Ed Broadbent as favouring universal day care. This means, says Vanwoudenberg, that "someone with an income of $100,000 can go on a skiing vacation and leave his kids 24 hours a day with a day care centre at taxpayers' expense."

Not fair! Broadbent (and many others) want universal access to day care, in the sense that working mothers will be able to find a safe place for their youngsters during the day. If rich people do use day care, they will pay for it through their own taxes, and probably at a higher rate, if Broadbent has his way.

On many other topics, Vanwoudenberg took extreme examples and generalized from them. He cited pamphlets distributed to Boy Scouts which offered aversion therapy to anyone not happy with their heterosexuality. Although this apparently did happen in one case several years ago, it is hardly standing policy in Canada.

Vanwoudenberg took several potshots at feminists, quoting only the most radical and often lesbian fringe groups. He referred to a Calgary prostitute who has infected 100 people with AIDS but can't legally be hauled off the streets. All these facts may be true, but to suggest that the whole country is going in this direction is to present less than the whole truth.

Rosy past?

Vanwoudenberg is also off track when he asks his audience to compare the 1980s with 30 years ago. In his view, life was better then. Marriages were stronger, politicians were less corrupt, young people were more moral, and the country adhered to shared Christian values.

Ed Vanwoudenberg, interim leader of the Christian Heritage Party.

In actual fact, there have been corrupt politicians all along. Dalton Camp recently told students at Acadia University how votes were bought by the dozens only a decade or two ago. The difference now is that journalists report the nepotism and the rewarding of party faithful.

As for marriages, thousands of couples stayed together in the past, but often in utter hostility or indifference. If some things were better in the 1950s, it must also be said that racism was much worse. Lynching of blacks in the U.S.

Continued on opposite page

Mama's dream

Illustration by Marguerite Witvoet

Evelyn Witter

"God loves you and I love you. So who can be against you?" Mama would frequently ask me. Answering such a question gave me such a feeling of security in love that it planted a response of love deep within me. A love for all people, but especially for Mama.

Mama evoked love in others despite the fact that she was direct and frank, and always had a control-grip on her emotions. But her soft-spoken voice and her common-sense wisdom made the bare truth acceptable even when it was not pleasant.

She was plain in appearance, with her brown hair drawn back in a neat bun, and her no-regard-for-chic clothing always clean and neatly pressed. Mama, short and thick, was not an arresting figure. Still, people were always aware of her when she entered a room.

Mama had "personality pull" even before psychologists had that particular quality tagged. Strong in her definitions of right and wrong, quietly religious, and dedicated to the idea that education was the salvation of the masses, she transmitted her philosophies, consciously or unconsciously, to everyone she met.

Mama was born in Chicago in 1877 of Czek immigrants. She was the second older of five children. She married a young Czek who had been educated in an exclusive military school in Vienna, and who at the death of his parents emigrated to America with his three brothers. She respected his education beyond normalcy, perhaps because she had only been permitted to finish the third grade before she was sent to work as a "cash girl" in Chicago's big Boston Store.

Mama became widowed when I was only five. She sold our impressive Oak Park home and bought a two-flat building in Chicago "for cheaper shelter costs." We lived on the monthly cheque from the trust fund my father had set up, but we were happy despite the limitations of the small, set income. Discontentment was never encouraged. "Whatever state we find ourselves in, therewith will we be content," Mama said. "There is no use bothering others with our little troubles and make them unhappy. Besides, we have the whole, big, beautiful world to learn about."

And learn we did. Mama studied right beside me when I did homework ... from grade school on! Her ecstacy at discovering literature and science was exhilarating! How carefully I listened to my teachers' explanations in all my classes so that I could relay the explanations to Mama!

As time went on, Mama became determined that "we" would go to college. Friends told her it was a foolish dream. "Poor widow's children just don't go to college," they told her. "Higher education is expensive."

"Her father was an educated man," she would counter, and the glints in her brown eyes made them look tawny.

Sometimes while we were studying, she'd say, "When you graduate from college as a teacher, you can help many people." And then her brown eyes would look as star-lit as a bride's.

Mama's dream matured to determination. When I graduated from high school, I told her, "Mama, the bulletin from the university says that board and room at the dormitory is $100 a month. Even if I worked summers and part-time during the school year we couldn't make it very well."

"Our country is in a depression. You can't count on jobs," she said. "We won't have to pay high cost board and room. I have it all figured."

"How, Mama?"

"We will rent our apartment here to some nice tenant and for the same money he pays us, we will rent an apartment in Champaign," she explained. "Besides I have been told that food costs are a little cheaper in Champaign than they are in Chicago."

"You mean ... you mean we will both go to Champaign? Together, Mama?"

"Together," she nodded with finality.

Mama and I found an apartment 12 blocks from campus. "The walks will do you good," Mama said when she signed the lease.

What a glorious four years followed! Mama and I making friends of all ages. Our apartment became a thoroughfare for interesting people, in-need-of-counselling students, and just nice-people people. Mama cooked a lot. But mostly Mama spent her time studying and going to lectures and drama presentations, and helping me with deeper explanations than were given in class. Mama — encouraging, demanding, handing out critical judgment, applauding successes, getting to the root of failures, vicariously enjoying my social life ....

On graduation day, when I left the line of degree recipients, and placed the B.S. degree in her hand, I said, "Mama, I'm a teacher."

All her faith in the goodness of life radiated through those expressive brown eyes. They were misty, and solemn, and giddy, all at the same time.

"Praise be to God!" she whispered as she drew me into her embrace. For the first time in her life, Mama trembled with emotion.

Evelyn Witter is a freelance writer from Milan, Illinois.

Vanwoudenberg. Continued from preceding page.

is not so far into the past. In the last three decades, Canada has seen great improvements in pension benefits for older people, medical care for all levels of society, protection of the handicapped and equal rights for women.

Speaking of the latter, Vanwoudenberg strongly criticized a Western feminist who said the woman's movement has redefined the definition of the family. He's clearly against such a redefinition, and by implication favours the traditional family: working father, mother at home with the kids. Although many of us prefer to see mothers with very young children stay home, Christian feminists will disagree that this is the only possible division of roles, based on their reading of Proverbs 31 and other Bible passages. Vanwoudenberg says he favours equality for women. However, no such equality is possible unless the traditional patriarchal family is redefined.

Ideology and politics

The CHP has a good idea about UIC recipients: they should go into retraining programs after three months, or do community work. Many of us will like that, but is this a viable political policy? In practice, it would take billions of dollars to retrain all the unemployed, and then there's no guarantee that the jobs would exist. Our mechanized society's vast problems can't be overcome so easily. Vanwoudenberg is mouthing ideology here, not politics.

The CHP favours capital punishment. Many Christians will agree with him, but is this a good stand to take? As one questioner noted at the Wolfville meeting, the Bible allows capital punishment, and it allows the stoning of adulterers. Does that mean we are obliged to carry out these punishments? Vanwoudenberg echoed the traditional, conservative, fundamentalist viewpoint here, and showed himself incapable of compromise or even a balanced discussion on this topic.

Need for answers

There's no real answer to the question of: do we support the Christian Heritage Party. Do we support motherhood and apple pie? Of course, we all want cleaner morals, stronger families, honest politicians and employees who try to give their boss his proper due. How to achieve those objectives is another matter.

Can a political party regulate the morals of the country? Can a government do so? If the CHP were to follow the NDP's lead and go from "a nothing party" to a strong national force within 20 years, would their members of Parliament remain free of corruption and the lust for power? Whose duty is it to function as the conscience of a nation?

It's high time Christians of all stripes begin asking themselves these questions. If the Christian Heritage Party is to be supported, how will we shape its policies? If we want Christians to run with the existing political parties, how will we help them to stand strong? If our sons and daughters want to become involved in politics, what will we tell them? Because together we've got to stop copping out and start working on a nation that has room for the Kingdom.

Anne Hutten is a journalist and mother of four. She acknowledges the input of Bill Hutten, Jr., a recent graduate in political theory.

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Features

Hendrik Conscience: champion of Flanders

John H. Martens

The history and language of Flanders found an ardent champion in Hendrik Conscience. It is he who stands at the beginning of an unparalleled Flemish renaissance in literature and patriotism.

Conscience was fascinated by his country's past and language. Writing in a romantic style, he produced many historical novels, which are still considered highlights of literary splendour.

His work is infused with a strong sense of patriotism, and through his efforts Conscience restored respectability to the Flemish language. Above all, he rekindled the flame of patriotism inthe Flemish lands, where to this day people are filled with extraordinary love and attachment to their own country, Flanders.

Hendrik Conscience was born in Antwerp in 1810. His father was a Frenchman, but from his Flemish mother he inherited an everlasting and undying passion for the Flemish tongue and Flanders' folklore.

She told and re-told him the stories of olden times, when Flanders was an important country and valiantly withstood the attacks by her neighbours, especially France. Conscience's imagination soared when his mother related to him the heroic deeds of the Van Arteveldes, who, among so many other Flemish heroes, were the champions of Flanders' freedom in the 14th century.

From 1831 until 1836, Conscience served in the Belgian army, which was then in conflict with the forces of the Northern Netherlands.

Father of Flemish novel

After his release from the army in 1836, Conscience began to devote himself entirely to writing about Flanders' history. That was not always easy, because he had to make a living and had to work. He did so successively in a variety of occupations. He worked as a clerk, a gardener's helper, again as a clerk, a government official and finally as the curator of a museum in Brussels.

In mentioning some of his books, we will restrict ourselves to his best-known works. With

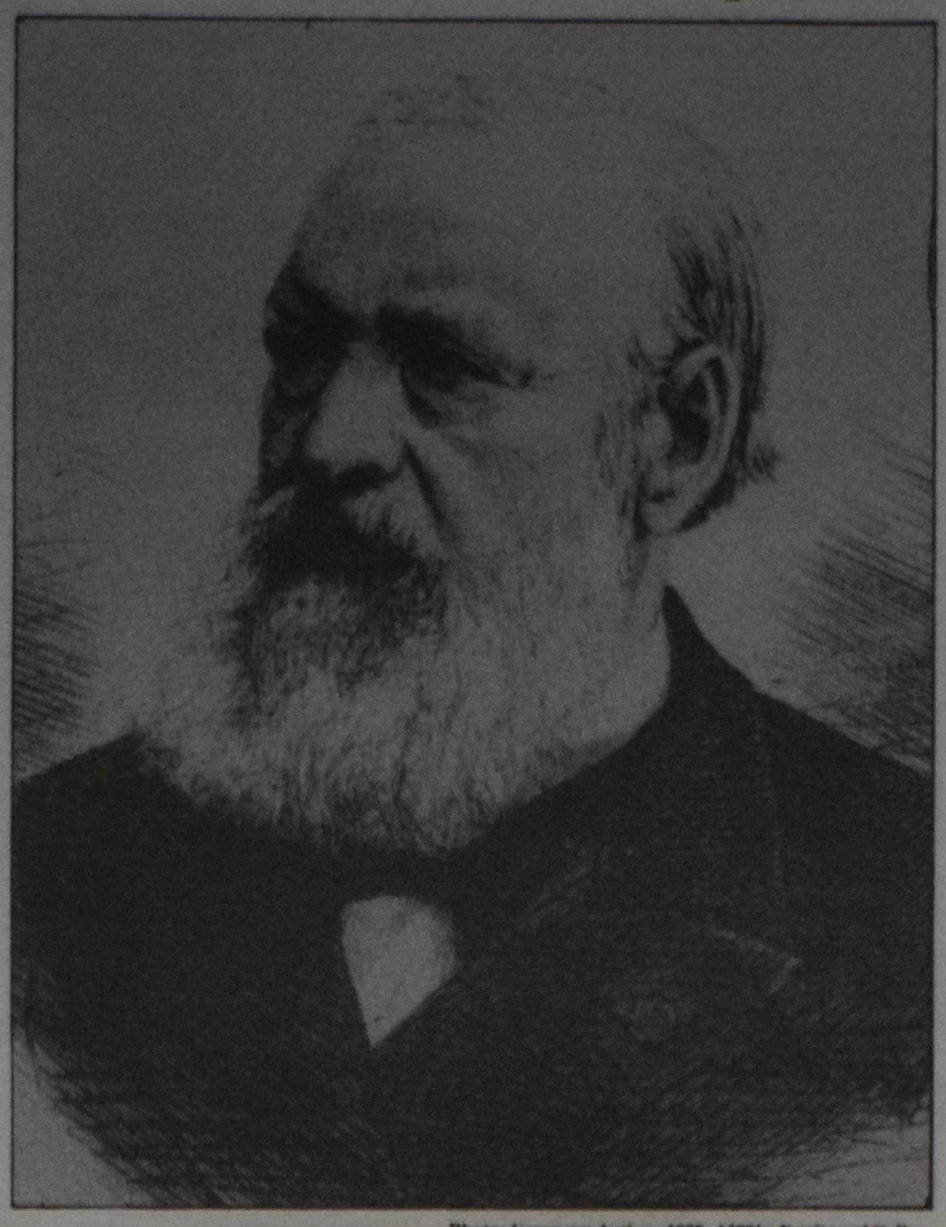

Photo: *European Authors 1000 - 1400* by Kunitz and Colby

Hendrik Conscience

De Leeuw van Vlaanderen (The Lion of Flanders, 1838), he became the Father of the Flemish novel, but most importantly inaugurated a period of re-awakening of patriotism and love of country among his Flemish countrymen. The book describes the heroic struggle of Flemish towns and cities against France around the beginning of the 14th century.

In the famous "Battle of the Golden Spurs," which was fought near the town of Kortryk (Coutrai) on July 11, 1302, the Flemish army, consisting mainly of ordinary workers, fighting on foot, managed to defeat the flower of the mounted French nobility.

After the battle some 700 pairs of golden spurs were gathered from the field of strife and hung as a thank offering in a Kortryk church, which was later demolished, when the tide turned against the Flemish towns.

Such was the material, masterfully handled by Conscience to point his compatriots to their glorious past. Ever since *De Leeuw van Vlaanderen* has been a fountain of patriotic inspiration for the Flemish people.

Other works

Another well-known work by the author is *De Loteling* (The Conscript - 1850), a moving tale of the anxieties and fears of a simple farm youth, who is confronted with the grim facts of military life after his sheltered existence down on the farm. It is unsurpassed as an idyllic description of rural — and village life with its close-knit family ties and bonds of affection between parents and children.

To the same category belong also the books entitled: *Blinde Rosa, Rikke-tikke-tak* and others.

If the reader ever gets a chance, while visiting the Old Country, he should look for a copy of *De Loteling* or some other work by Hendrik Conscience,

No other book than the one first mentioned will give a better glimpse into the soul and character of the Flemish speaking people.

It is hard to resist mentioning the names of other books of Conscience's hand. They are: *Wat een moeder lijden kan* (What a mother can suffer), *Siska van Roosemaal, Baas Gansendonk, Houten Clara* (Wooden Clara), *De Arme Edelman* (The Poor Gentleman) and the historical novel *Jacob van Artevelde*. We will conclude with *Het Goudland* (the land of gold) and *Kerels van Vlaanderen* (Heroes of Flanders).

Great stature

In 1881 the author saw the publication of his 100th book. Two years later he died. In the same year, 1883, a statue was unveiled in commemoration of the genial writer in his home town Antwerp.

He was honoured in his life time, during which he acquired world wide fame far beyond the Flemish borders through translations of his works in several languages.

Conscience ranks as one of the top writers of Dutch historical novels. He is in league with contemporary writers of the Northern Netherlandic literary scene such as Van Lennep and Oltmans, known to every Dutch descended individual by *De Roos van Dekema* (Van Lennep) and *Het Slot Loevestein* (Oltmans).

Perhaps Hendrik Conscience surpassed the Northern Netherlandic authors, because in an international context his historical novels easily bear comparison with those of Sir Walter Scott or Victor Hugo. What more needs to be said?

Try to grab some of his works in a Dutch or Flemish bookshop, and before your eyes the Flemish past will rise in brilliant and startling colours.

John Martens passed away earlier this year. He loved to write historical fiction and non-fiction.

The Fraser Valley Indians

Susan Monkman

(Canadian Scene) — The Fraser Valley Indians of British Columbia, consisting of many different tribes, have a culture and heritage all their own.

They originally lived in villages of one or more extended and closely related families: fathers, sons, brothers, cousins, uncles and their wives, children and other dependants. Males were dominant and much preoccupied with holding and improving their social position, so much so, that they considered games a waste of time, if not unmanly. However, this did not stop them from gambling. They owned beautifully carved and painted sets of sticks to play with, which were kept in special leather cases. They made their own "dice," shaped like little arm chairs, from beaver teeth.

Internal law and justice were already firmly enforced, to the extent that anyone who would disrupt the harmony of the community, would be exiled or even killed.

Warm welcome

When Scottish explorer Simon Fraser first came to British Columbia, he was impressed by the spontaneity of the Upper Stalo Indians, who lived in the vicinity of Hope, Yale and Agassiz, up and down the Fraser River. They welcomed him warmly, like a long lost cousin. Mats were spread and an abundance of smoked salmon was served in wooden dishes. They presented Fraser with moccasins, a robe of bearskin and various gifts of wood carvings. Later the first goldminers, when they came to this area, received the same friendly welcome, so that some of them did not hesitate to move in and live with the Indians.

Family formation

Big families were favoured, but already — with innate biological wisdom — the births of babies were usually spaced two years apart, because they knew that children born too close together, did not do well. In order to prevent conception during that time, the mother would brew tea of crab apple bark and drink one or two quarts of this ... Due to superstition the occurrence of twins was thought to affect the weather. Another one of their beliefs was, that if twins lived in the proximity of other people, they would die. The family would hide them in an underground shelter until they had grown strong and healthy.

An elderly Indian woman drying berries in the sun in British Columbia.

Respect for elderly

Girls were trained by their grandmothers, while the education of the young boys was left to the paternal grand-father. As a result, young children spent more time with their grandparents than with their parents, who were usually away on berry-picking — or hunting expeditions.

The native people of BC had great respect for their old people. The consensus was: the older a person gets, the more he has learned. At large gatherings the old people made speeches, giving advice to the younger generations. At feasts, old men were served first, given the choicest parts of fish and seniors lived with their adult children until the day they died. Sons and daughters considered it an honour to provide a home for their elders.

When we look at the highrise towers of today, where many of our seniors live in solitude, we are reminded that the native people of British Columbia were way ahead of us in their attitude towards elderly parents.

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NOTE: Newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $10! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $10 and the couple's future address.

Thanks

HAANSTRA: We would like to thank our children and grandchildren for everything they have done for us to make our 40th anniversary so beautiful. We would also like to thank all the relatives and friends who came to celebrate with us, and for those who came to our "open house." We thank everyone for their best wishes, gifts and the many cards we received. These memories will stay with us forever. Above all we thank and praise the Lord for His many blessings.
P.O. York, ON N0A 1R0

Birthdays

With thanksgiving and praise to God, we are grateful that the Lord has spared the life of our Mother,

AUKJE REGNERUS
(nee Barwegen)

who will celebrate her 90th birthday on July 7, 1987.
We pray that the Lord will continue to be with her.
Her thankful children:
Tinus & Annie
Anne & Pete
Bob & Edith
Sam & Alyce
Louie & Jane
Mary (Bill — deceased)
Andy & Diane
George & Thea
39 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren.
Also survived by two sisters in The Netherlands: Tjitske, and a twin sister, Jeltje.
Home address: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

Births

DYSSELHOF: With thankfulness, we, Rick and Marian of Mississauga, are pleased to announce the birth of our first-born son MITCHELL JAMES, on Friday, June 19, 1987. Proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. H. Dysselhof of Brampton and Mr. and Mrs. J. Vandermeer of Mississauga.
Home address: 6446 Colebrook Cresc., Meadowville, ON L5N 3E2

VELDHUIS: With thankfulness to the Lord, we, Brian and Jenny, announce the birth of our first child, a daughter, JUSTINE JENNIFER, born on June 15, 1987, at 10:06 a.m., weighing 8 lbs. 13 oz. Justine is the fifth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. John Veldhuis, Jarvis, and the 37th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Miedema, Waterford. She is also the 71st great-grandchild for Mrs. Antje Miedema, Shalom Manor, Grimsby.
Home address: R.R.#4, Simcoe, ON N3Y 4K3

Births

VIS: Paul and MaryAnne (Veldstra) thank the Lord for another healthy daughter TAMMY LEE, born on June 19, 1987, weighing 7 lbs. 12 oz. A little sister for Jason, Jodie and Kevin. Proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. L. Vis and Mr. and Mrs. J. Veldstra.
Home address: R.R.#1, Jerseyville, ON L0R 1R0

Marriages

BOTMA-KOETSIER: With joy and thankfulness, Mr. and Mrs. J. Botma and Mr. and Mrs. J. Koetsier announce the forthcoming marriage of their children ELIZABETH MARION and JACOB RONALD. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, July 10, 1987, 4:30 p.m., at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Listowel, Ont.
Future address: R.R.#3, Listowel, ON N4W 3G8

BROER-VANARRAGON: Dick and Linie Broer and John and Henny VanArragon are delighted to announce the marriage of their children KATHLEEN and PAUL. The ceremony will take place on July 17, 1987, at 7:00 p.m., in the Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. Morbey will officiate.

DE VRIES-VAN VEENENDAAL: Mr. and Mrs. Harm De Vries of Dunnville, Ont., are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter JOYCE to ED, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. van Veenendaal, Krommenie, The Netherlands. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 4, 1987, at 2 p.m., at Little Trinity Church, Toronto. Rev. Jack Westerhof and Rev. Peter Moore officiating.
Future address: 213 Crestwood Rd., Thornhill, ON L4J 1A8

VANTIL-PETRUSMA: With thanks to the Lord, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vantil and Mr. and Mrs. George Petrusma are happy to announce the marriage of their children, TERESA and EDWARD. The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, July 25, 1987, at 3:30 p.m., in the Blenheim Chr. Ref. Church, with pastor K. VanderWal and pastor H. Lunshof officiating.
Future address: 26 Dawson Cresc., Brampton, ON L6V 3N5

Anniversaries

"The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)
God has certainly been faithful to His promises in the 40 years of marriage for His children,

FOPPE (Paul) and JET (Jessie)
DE JONG

We thank Him for His goodness, and pray for many more years of happiness. They will celebrate their 40th anniversary on July 9, with an open house on July 11 at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Woodstock, Ont., from 2-4 p.m. We invite their friends to celebrate with us.
Happy anniversary, Mom and Dad, from:
Albert & Jessie Schut; Kevin, Steven, Jonathan, Danielle — Edmonton, Alta.
Bob & Sue Paillster; Gini, Greg, Jamie — Bothwell, Ont.
Frances — Edmonton, Alta.
Home address: 268 Russell St., Woodstock, ON N4S 2Z4

Congratulations!

Anniversaries

Aalten, The Neth. Taber, Alta.
1952 June 26 1987
With gratitude and joy to our Lord, we celebrated the 35th wedding anniversary of our Dad and Mom,

DICK and SINA KEMPE

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and keep them in His care for the coming years.
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Wilma & Garth Bekkering; Howard, Heather, Jennifer, Leanne — Grassie Lake, Alta.
Henry & Pearl Kempe; Joshua, Daniel, Sarita — Grassie Lake, Alta.
Jack & Annette Kempe; Stacey, Janine, Jason, Shawn — Taber, Alta.
Pete & Pat Kempe; Dennis, Eric, Matthew — Taber, Alta.
Ina & Jim Wall — Calgary, Alta.
Home address: 5423 44th Ave., S. Taber, AB T0K 2G0

1932 July 14 1987
55 years
"O, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads us to the Lamb."

ENTE JELLE and HILDA SCHARRINGA

We thank the Lord for all the blessings He has given to our parents and to us as a family.
We pray for His continued guidance in the years to come.
With love from your children:
Peter & Rita; and family
John
Christina & Simon; and family
Shirley and Tanya
12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.
We invite all friends and acquaintances to an open house which will be held in their honour at the house of their son Peter and Rita Scharringa, on the 4th Concession, west of Highway #6, in Waterdown, on July 18, 1987.
Home address: 307 Bowman St., Hamilton, ON L8S 2V4

Accommodations

21-year-old Ryerson student looking for **accommodation** or others to share a house or apartment in the downtown **Toronto area.** Contact: Sandra Wynia, 508-33 Leaside Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2M 4G2. Phone: (416) 937-2700.

22-year-old female, Redeemer College graduate, needs accommodations near the University of Toronto to continue her studies there. Please call: Helen Vreugdenhil in Chatham at (519) 352-2836 collect.

Responsible Christian female, 18-years-old, looking for room and board on the bus route to Seneca College, King Campus. Call Jo-Anne van Leeuwen at (519) 356-2368.

Business

Evangelistic materials in Arabic. Also, a handbook in English, **The Bible & Islam** ($1.95). Arabic Ministry, The Back to God Hour, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8.

Miscellaneous

Durham Region Right to Life Association has audio and video materials as well as speakers available for students, teachers, clubs and churches, etc. For info. (416) 668-7911.

Anniversaries

Aalten Trenton
1942 July 3 1987
With grateful hearts, we thank God for the gift of our parents,

JOHN and ANNA WIGGERS
(nee Sikking)

who will celebrate with family and friends the 45th anniversary of their wedding.
"... and Jesus was called to the marriage." (John 2:2)
Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa, we pray that God will continue to keep you in His care.
Love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:
Riki & Fred Westrik; Charles, John, Duane, Andrew
George & Sarah Wiggers; Lisa, Anna
Diane & Henk TeBrake; Andrea, Monique, Melissa
Wilma & Albert Vos; John, Burke, Ruth, Joyce
Audrey & Hessel Vandervelde; Mandy, Shawn, Tyler
Pam & Dan Dizon; Matthew

Personals

Sincere Christian bachelor, financially secure, desires meeting sincere Christian lady, 30-40 years old. Children welcome. Reply to File #2464, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

Miscellaneous

Happy Anniversary!

As a way of extending our congratulations, C.C. will publish anniversary pictures **free of charge** for those couples celebrating 50 years or more together.

All other pictures are subject to a charge of $7.50 (Canadian).

Obituaries

After a serious illness of cancer, the Lord took unto Himself,

PETER STEEGSTRA

beloved husband of Sadie Leystra.
Dear father of:
Gertie & Jake Buruma
Joanne Verhoef
Alita Postma
Eda & Harry Greydanus
Ed Steegstra
Jerry & Verlaine Steegstra
Teresa & Brad Hargreaves
Janet Steegstra
Loved grandfather of 17 grandchildren.
Also survived by four sisters and one brother in The Netherlands.
Passed away in London on Sunday, June 7, 1987, in his 66th year.
"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. 27:1)

It pleased the Lord to call home unto Himself, our much-loved member,

Mrs. GEPKE VAN DER WIER

Her life was a witness for the Lord. May the Lord be near her husband and children.
The "Sixty-Plus Club" of the Smithville Chr. Ref. Church.

"For all the saints
who from their labours rest
Who Thee by faith
before the world confessed
Thy name oh Jesus
Be forever blessed!
Hallelujah!"
On June 12, 1987, at the age of 76,

GERBRIGJE VANDERWIER
(nee Brouwer)

passed away into glory to be with her Lord.
Beloved wife of Uitze VanderWier.
Precious mother of:
William & Katie VanderWier — Smithville
Theresa Wesseling — Stratford
Marie & Harry Versteeg — Simcoe
Korny & Pat VanderWier — Welland-port
Dave & Tina VanderWier — Welland-port
Wayne & Martha VanderWier — Smithville
Howard & Jacquie VanderWier — Dunnville
Anna & Stan Riewald — Hagersville
Helen & Lawrence DeGraaf — Beamsville
Dear grandmother of 54 grandchildren. The funeral service was held on Tuesday, June 16, 1987, in the Smithville Chr. Ref. Church. Pastor Eugene DeJong officiating.
Home address: 139 Rock St., Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

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St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

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_____
(Date)

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Teachers

CHILLIWACK, B.C.: Chilliwack Chr. School invites applications for one teachers position for **Grade 1/2 combination,** and a possible part-time position for Grade 2. Please send resume to. Mr. Jim Bleeker, Chilliwack Chr. School, 9750 McNaught Rd., Box 161, Chilliwack, B.C. V2P 6G2 or call 604-792-4171.

HOUSTON, B.C.: The Houston Chr. School is seeking applications for a **Grade 7/8** teacher with a major in Science. Please contact the principal Mr. H. Fritschy, Houston Chr. School, Box 237, Houston, B.C. V0J 1Z0. Tel. (604) 845-7736 (school) or 845-7953 (home).

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Phone: (416) 352-2308

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(416) 648-2182

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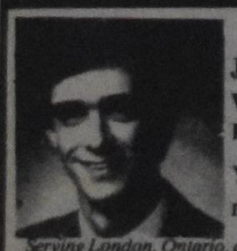

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Events

Canada claims Arctic sovereignty

Marcus Van Steen

(Canadian Scene) — The question of Canadian sovereignty over our northern waters is becoming a matter of serious concern. Canadian ownership and control of the vast Arctic archipelago had been taken for granted until 1969, when a U.S. oil tanker, *The Manhattan,* proceeded through the Northwest Passage without seeking Canadian permission. This was clearly a move by Washington to assert its claim that the Northwest Passage is an international water, similar to the Strait of Gibraltar and the Dardanelles.

Canada says this is not so. Our position is that the Arctic waters are ice-covered for most or all of the year and have been used by generations of northern natives as an extension of the land. The Canadian government wants control over shipping in the Arctic waters so that it can impose safeguards to prevent oil spills or other accidents that could affect the food supply and welfare of the Inuit and native Indians who live in the area.

The first sign that the United States was prepared to discuss the matter came when President Reagan, during a brief visit to Ottawa earlier this year, promised to try to get negotiations going. He did not say when.

Late ownership

Canadian concern about the Arctic is a fairly recent development. Canada acquired its first northern possession in 1870 when the Hudson's Bay Company handed over Rupert's Land, a territory that extended from Hudson Bay to the Rocky Mountains. In 1880 Great Britain transferred its Arctic territories, comprising half-a-million square miles of land and water, to Canadian sovereignty.

Canada, however, paid little attention until the Klondyke Gold Rush of 1898, when Ottawa dispatched half a dozen Mounties to the area to maintain law and order. The Yukon was proclaimed a Canadian Territory in 1898, and Canada's first venture into the Arctic islands was made in 1903, when a Mountie officer and one constable were sent to Herschel Island in the Beaufort Sea to protect the natives from outsiders, mostly American whalers and traders.

The first attempt to map the Arctic archipelago, which consists of 20 large and about 18,000 small islands, was started in 1908. It was made by Joseph-Elzera Bernier, a captain with the Federal Department of Marine and Fisheries. A second voyage was made in 1910, but when the government cancelled further voyages, Bernier struck out on his own, financing a number of trips by trading with the northern natives. By the time he retired in 1925, a large area of the Eastern Arctic was mapped and claimed for Canada.

What has aroused the present concern over Arctic sovereignty is the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union confront each other across the polar wastes. The United States has stepped up submarine patrols in the Arctic waters, without consulting Canada. The recent government white paper revealed that Canadian defence planners are in favour of building powerful ice-breakers and nuclear submarines and establishing northern bases for reconnaissance air patrols, among other steps to rebuild the nation's Armed Forces.

Calendar of Events

July 8	"Hollandse Dag" in the arena, 334 Metcalfe St. W., **Strathroy,** Ont. Speaker: Rev. Harry VanderWindt. Starts at 10 a.m.
July 9	CFF of Ontario Provincial Board Meeting from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Georgetown District Chr. School, **Georgetown,** Ont. For info. call CFFO office at (519) 837-1620.
July 11	"Zeeuwse Picnic" starting at 12 noon in Springbank Park (site 12), **London,** Ont. Everyone welcome!
July 18	Kaatsen Tournament in **Woodstock,** Ont. Phone (519) 485-0639.
July 22-29	International Cadet Camporee '87, held at Camp Beaverdam near **Orangeville,** Ont. Open house at Camp Beaverdam July 26 starting at 10 a.m. Lunch provided. Everyone welcome.
July 25	Organ and clarinet concert featuring organist Andre Knevel and the Dutch clarinet virtuoso Henk de Graaf. At 8 p.m. in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, William St., **Lindsay,** Ont.
July 31-Aug. 3	Annual ICS Conference at Niagara Christian College Campus, **Fort Erie,** Ont. Theme: "To be near God." Keynote speaker: Pastor Derk Pierik, U of T campus chaplain.
Aug. 8	Kaatsen Tournament in **Burford,** Ont. Phone (519) 485-0639.
Aug. 15	"Drijberse Dag" to be held at Pine Hurst Conservation Area, Hwy. 24A (between **Cambridge** and **Paris**). For info. contact Marinus and Marie Booy at (519) 269-3718 or Bert and Jenny Smit at (416) 957-7617.
Aug. 22	Kaatsen Tournament in **Oakville,** Ont. Phone (519) 485-0639.
Sept. 7	Kaatsen Tournament in **Stoney Creek,** Ont. Phone (519) 485-0639.
Sept. 12	Redeemer College Annual Membership Meeting & Convocation. Starts at 10 a.m. at Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont.
Sept. 12	25th Annual Youth Evangelism Services Conference from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Covenant CRC, **Woodstock,** Ont. For info. call E. Munnik at (416) 279-8907 after August 20.
Sept. 19	Kaatsen Tournament in **Ingersoll,** Ont. Phone (519) 485-0639.
Sept. 19	30th annual convention of the Ontario CRC School Association at E. Northumberland S. School, **Brighton,** Ont. Host: Trenton CRC. Speakers: Cele Mereness and Harvey Smit. For info. call (519) 884-6044.
Sept. 24-26	Sixth Biennial Conference on Dutch-American Studies at Trinity Christian College, **Palos Heights,** Ill. For info. contact Dr. Hendrik Sliekers at (312) 597-3000.
Oct. 3	Sixtieth anniversary and reunion of "Christelijk Lyceum (HBS)" in **Apeldoorn, The Netherlands.** On this occasion the school will publish a book commemorating the airplane accident in Oct., 1946. Former students can write to Wim J. Van Veen, P.O. Box 1057, Station Q, Toronto, ON M4T 2P2.
Oct. 3-18	25th anniversary of the Blyth CRC, **Blyth,** Ont. For info. phone Fritz Datema at (519) 526-7202.
Oct. 24	Second annual Holy Spirit conference at Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. For info. call Gerrit Verstraete at (416) 890-3222.
Nov. 7	Dedication of the famous REIL tracker-action pipe organ in the auditorium of Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. The two-manual, 2000-pipe organ from Heerde, The Netherlands, will be played by virtuoso organist Christiaan Teeuwsen, Redeemer's new Assistant Professor of Music.
Nov. 21	Arts & Crafts Festival at TDCH, **Woodbridge,** Ont.

Advertising Deadlines

Dated	Mailed	Display ad deadline	Classified deadline
Fri. July 10	Tues. July 7	Wed. July 1-8:30a.m.	Thurs. July 2-8:30a.m.
Fri. July 17	Tues. July 14	Wed. July 8-8:30a.m.	Thurs. July 9-8:30a.m.
Fri. July 24	Tues. July 21	Wed. July 15-8:30a.m.	Thurs. July 16-8:30a.m.

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To receive these benefits, **all funds must be brought to Dordt in Canadian currency or cheques.**

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DORDT COLLEGE, SIOUX CENTER, IOWA 51250.

Researchers hope for summer-long strawberries

GUELPH, Ont. (Canadian Scene)—Mouthwatering Canadian strawberries disappear too fast for those who enjoy them. In Ontario alone, after the domestic harvest ends in mid- to late June, hungry consumers across the province pay out another $5-million for imported strawberries, mostly from California and Florida.

Soon, however, a proven European growing technique could result in fresh, local strawberries all summer long. Last May a University of Guelph research team, led by horticultural science professor Alan Sullivan, began growing specially prepared strawberry plants in "waiting beds" that had a high concentration of plants. By early November, the researchers had vigorous plants with a high-potential yield for 1987 season. The plants were then put into cold storage.

"All we have to do now is take them out of cold storage at various intervals and plant them in normal cropping beds" says Sullivan. "As they mature, we expect they'll provide a continuous supply of fruit well past the usual season."

Even though strawberries grown by the waiting bed technique would cost more to produce, Sullivan expects they could still be competitively priced with imports. By the time they reached market they would have travelled only a few kilometres compared with the thousands from the United States.

Correction

In last week's coverage of synod, an error was made in the article, "The call: covenant or contract?," where it states that a synodical interim committee was appointed in 1985 to study the matter of care for smaller churches. Actually, a study committee was appointed, and all references to the SIC committee in that article refer in fact to the study committee.

Dutch

Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl

Lang gewacht, nooit gedacht, stil gezwegen, toch gekregen. Eindelijk kwam de aap uit de mouw: een nieuw belastingschema. Het leek verdacht veel op een bloedtransfusie van de linkerarm naar de rechterarm van de patient. Het zou een eerlijker verdeling van de last gaan betekenen, alswel als een vereenvoudiging van het hele belastingstelsel. Bovendien zou een groter gedeelte van de belastingdruk uitgeoefend gaan worden op de naamloze vennootschappen. Of het gelukken zal staat te bezien. Die vereenvoudiging zal ook wel niet zo'n vaart lopen. Het is moeilijk voor regeringen om eenvoudig te werken. Om te beginnen zit het zo dat iemand die $100.000 per jaar verdient $1500.00 per jaar minder inkomstenbelasting gaat betalen terwijl iemand op de onderste trap van het loonstelsel er niet meer dan $99.00 per jaar op vooruit gaat.

★★★★

Mijn voorspelling is, dat we volgend jaar allemaal wat minder inkomstenbelasting zullen betalen, hetgeen dan direkt gevolgd zal worden door verkiezing en dat daarna de belasting als een raket omhoog zal gaan door middel van een nieuwe en veel hogere omzetbelasting.

★★★★

De Kamerleden gaan volgende week met zomervacantie. Er wordt verwacht, dat de regering een stemming inzake de doodstraf gaat forceren. Monsieur Brian Mulroney had zijn fijnste uur toen hij in de Kamer zijn mening over de doodstraf uitsprak. Hij noemde het weerzinwekkend en gruwelijk in een beschaafd land. Precies mijn mening, waar geen tweehonderd ingezonden brieven mij vanaf zullen krijgen. Net zo min als ingezonden brieven mijn vaste overtuiging zouden kunnen veranderen dat Jimmy and Tammy Bakker zwendelaars zijn van het ergste soort.

★★★★

De brievenbestellers hebben mijn sympathy niet, maar er zit genoeg roodheid in mijn politieke overtuiging om het gebruik van plaatsvervangende werkers ten sterkste af te keuren. De direktie van Canada Post gaat natuurlijk ook niet vrij uit. We zitten in de maag met een middeleeuws systeem, en niemand is bereid om veranderingen in de verhoudingen tussen werkers en direktie een kans te geven. En wij zitten met de gebakken peren: geen brieven van Tante Katrien.

★★★★

De tarievenonderhandelingen kwamen in opspraak. Het werd bekend, dat de Amerikaanse delegatie in de onderhandelingen wil proberen het huidige zogenaamde Auto Pact ongedaan te maken. Het Auto Pact maakt het mogelijk om onder zekere kondities auto's zonder accijnzen de grens te laten passeren. In de laatste tijd gingen er meer auto's ons land uit dan er binnen kwamen, hetgeen vooral in Michigan ongenoegen veroorzaakte. De Canadese auto-industrie is voornamelijk gesitueerd in Ontario en Quebec, en de premiers van die provincies staan op hun achterste benen.

★★★★

Een soort tweederangs wonder gebeurde in de Kamer, toen Svend Robinson van de N.D.P. een kabinetminister te hulp kwam. Het ging om beschuldigingen tegen Minister Stewart McInnes. Het is net als met een totale zonsverduistering; we zullen lang moeten wachten totdat zoiets weer gebeurt.

★★★★

De vertrekhal, maar ook vooral de aankomsthal, van het vliegveld in Toronto leken de laatste tijd veel op New York 's Times Square op Nieuwjaarsavond: een gekkenhuis. Zelfs de Minister voor Transportzaken, John Crosbie, vond het te gek worden, en er zal nu een derde aankomst – en vertrekgebouw komen. De aanvankelijke kostenberekening zit zo ongeveer op $365 miljoen.

★★★★

Volgende week maakt de nieuwe dollar z'n intrede. Het geldstuk heeft de beeltenis van een "loon" die rustig over kalme waters glijdt en ik voorspel dat een dollar voortaan de bijnaam krijgt van "loonie."

★★★★

"Houzee" Waldheim gaat bij de Paus op visite, hetgeen een hele hoop mensen niet goed bevalt. De regering van Israel heeft haar afkeuring in sterke termen te kennen gegeven. In Oostenrijk gaan nu ook vragen op of het presidentschap van Kurt Waldheim het land wel goed doet. De Oostenrijkse bondskanselier Vranitzky vindt, dat een internationaal tribunaal moet oordelen over de juistheid van de berichten over het oorlogsverleden van Waldheim.

★★★★

De oorlog tussen Iran en Iraq gaat maar door. Wapenfabrikanten smullen er van. Zes-en-twintig landen verkopen oorlogstuig aan die landen. Canada verkoopt alleen aan Iran. De handel in oorlogswapenen kwam in 1985 tot een totaal van $900 biljoen. Jesaja zag de zwaarden in ploegscharen omgesmeed. Het is nog niet zo ver. Wij leven echter in de vaste hoop dat ook dat zal gebeuren.

★★★★

De zogenaamde "Contra-Gate-Kommissie" hervat de zittingen in Washington. Er is echter al overduidelijk gebleken, dat een groep hooggeplaatste funktionarissen hun laars lapten aan het hele demokratische regeringsstelsel in Amerika.

★★★★

In Zuid Korea, waar onderbroeken en hemden met pseudo slavenarbeid geproduceerd worden, zijn de mensen 't zat. De drang naar vrijheid is losgebroken in de straten van Seoul en Pusan. In verband met de komende Olympische Spelen kan de regering haar barbaarse onderdrukking van de demokratie niet al te ver doorvoeren. Er zouden dan ook onderhandelingen op komst zijn tussen de regering en de oppositie.

★★★★

De huizenprijzen in Londen, Engeland zijn ook niet voor de poes. Een éénkamer-woning van vijf bij drie meter omvang werd verkocht voor $120.000.

★★★★

Met een plons in het water van het kanaal van Eindhoven is in die stad op waardige wijze afscheid genomen van de lelijke eend. De auto, die onlangs door Citroën uit de produktie werd genomen, kreeg aldus onder grote publieke belangstelling een waardig graf. Op 20 juli is een internationale protesttocht van lelijke eenden naar Parijs gepland, om daar bij Citroën te demonstreren tegen het verdwijnen van de "deux chevaux." Er worden voor die tocht duizenden eenden verwacht, en we vermelden 't hier maar even zodat u als rechtgeaard burger mee kunt doen.

★★★★

Er is vooral in de kring van de intelligentsia een sterke neiging tot het niet verwijderen van haar rondom de kin. Baarden zijn in bij de geleerden. Hetgeen ons herinnert aan een oud Nederlands spreekwoord: "De baard maakt geen wijsgeer; anders was de bok er ook een." Er is, dat moet ik wel zeggen, ook een ander tamelijk bejaard spreekwoord dat zegt: "Een kusje zonder baard, is een eitje zonder zout." Misschien zijn al die geleerden toch wel iets op 't spoor.

Carl Tuyl is predikant van de First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ontario.

Riekske (IV)

Lini R. Grol

De dokter lachte om mijn verontwaardigd gezicht. "Het is een vrij land" beweerde hij voor de zoveelste keer, maar voegde er meteen aan toe: "De vrijheid van de één grenst aan de ander. En je denkt natuurlijk dat ik die ouders had moeten verbieden het kind mee te nemen, maar dan zouden zij ons tegenwerken, en als het kind weer ingebracht moest worden zouden ze daar twee keer over denken."

Riekske was intussen gekalmeerd; de injectie begon te werken en hij liet het nu rustig toe, dat de dokter de wonden voorzichtig betastte en tenslotte met vaseline gaas bedekte. Maar weer kwam de plaaggeest in de dokter boven, want hij herhaalde zijn vorige gezegden weer: "Je gelooft me niet, dat ze spinrag of koemest op wonden doen? Nou en erger hoor."

"Nooit van gehoord," verzekerde ik hem boos. "En ik heb in kleine plaatsen gewerkt in Holland waar de plattelandsmensen heel hygiënisch leefden." Hij haalde zijn schouders op. Ineens zei Riekske, en ik voelde het als verraad: "Als ik op mijn knieën val en het zeer doet, zoent moeder het af, maar Mien doet er alleen maar spuug op."

Verschrikt keek ik naar de dokter. Had hij het verstaan? Hij lachte en zei met een knikje naar mij: "Daar ga je dan, sister, natuurlijk is die spuug van dat meisje steriel, maar wacht wat ze doen als ze het verband moeten wisselen."

"Er wordt geen verband gewisseld; ik zorg wel dat ze bij u komen."

"Dat krijg je vast niet gedaan. Als hij thuis is op de farm, doen ze wat ze altijd hebben gedaan: volgen hun eigen denkwijze en middelen."

"U zult het zien," zei ik grimmig. Riekske begreep er niets van. Hij verstond het natuurlijk niet allemaal, maar hij begreep wel dat ik boos was.

"Kunt u dat verband verder afwerken; ik heb een hele reeks patienten die op mij wachten." Dokter streek Riekske over zijn bol en zei vriendelijk: "Hou je verband schoon als je kunt, jochie."

Riekske knikte vurig: "Ja, ja. Maar als het vuil wordt doet vader er wel weer een ander om. Vader kan alles."

Dokter knikte en knipoogde naar mij en voor hij de deur uitging fluisterde hij me toe: "Een schoon verband van spinrag, wat ik je zeg."

Hij gaf me geen kans om iets terug te zeggen en trok vlug de deur dicht. Nu was Riekske helemaal op zijn gemak en had geen pijn meer. Gewillig hield hij zijn armpjes omhoog terwijl ik meters verband om hem heen wikkelde. "Goeie, wat een boel doet u eromheen," zei hij bewonderend. Maar ook dat was gauw vergeten in zijn enthousiasme over het naar huis gaan.

"Ik zal je missen, Riekske," zei ik toen het laatste rolletje elastoplast rond zijn middel was bevestigd.

Spontaan sloeg hij zijn armen om mijn hals en zei vertrouwelijk: "Ja, ik zal jou ook missen. Maar je hebt toch wel andere jongens?"

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In de voetstappen van de emigrant

Bert Witvoet

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Ongeveer 28 Friezen brachten een bezoek aan de synode van de Christian Reformed Church op 11 juni. De groep stond onder de leiding van Jan Niemeijers, een Groningse schrijver van historische boeken. De naam van de reisgroep is "In the Footsteps," dat wil zeggen, in de voetstappen van de emigranten.

De Friesche groep heeft een bezoek gebracht aan Toronto, Sarnia, Grand Rapids, Holland (Michigan) en London. Een paar weken eerder was er een groep van 40 Zeeuwen die een gelijksoortige reis maakte. Volgens Niemeijers is er grote belangstelling in Nederland om de nauwe banden tussen

Photo: Marguerite Witvoet

Nederlandse Amerikanen en Canadezen te bewaren, en om de emigrantengeschiedenis persoonlijk te ervaren.

"Wij vinden het indrukwekkend om te zien hoeveel er is overgebleven van de geestelijke erfenis, het geloof der vaderen, en hoe sterk de kerkelijke gemeenschap hier is," zei Niemeijers. Maar hij vond diskussies over de vrouw in het ambt wel een beetje "een achterhaald station."

De groep poseert op het terrein van Calvin College. Jan Niemeijers is uiterst rechts, eerste rij.

Hij keek trouwhartig naar me op toen ik nee schudde. Toen klaarde zijn gezichtje ineens op en vroeg hij opgewonden: "Maar heb u dan geen plank?"

"Plank?," herhaalde ik, verbaasd door de wending van ons gesprek. Hoe kwamen we nu ineens op een plank?

Riekske knikte enthousiast: "Ja, als u maar een plank heb kan mijn vader wel een jongetje voor u maken; mijn vader kan alles als hij maar hout heb." Ik dacht ineens aan de moeder die met zoveel verering over haar man had gesproken en nu Riekske ook weer. Wat een familie, dacht ik vol bewondering. Ik ontweek het antwoord op de plank. "Kom Riekske, je moeder staat al te wachten en beneden is vader met de truck en je broertjes en zusjes. "Ik hoefde niet meer te zeggen. Hij liet mijn hand los en rende naar zijn kamertje waar zijn moeder geduldig zat te wachten.

"Moeder, moeder, ik ga naar huis. Maar vader moet voor zuster een plank vinden en een jongetje voor haar maken," schreeuwde hij luid, terwijl hij in haar open armen rende.

Ik was blij dat hij Hollands sprak en niemand hem kon verstaan, want de hele staf stond toe te kijken en te luisteren toen hij zijn verhaal afratelde.

★ ★ ★ ★

Twee weken later ontmoette ik de dokter in de hal. Van verre maakte hij al een dreigend gebaar, maar hij lachte er bij, en ik vroeg me al af welke plagerij hij nu weer voor me had bedacht. Hij was tijdens de oorlog in Holland geweest en scheen er een speciaal plezier in te hebben om mij te plagen en er een paar Hollandse zinnen bij in te gooien.

"Wat is het deze keer," vroeg ik argeloos toen we dichterbij elkaar kwamen.

★ ★ ★ ★

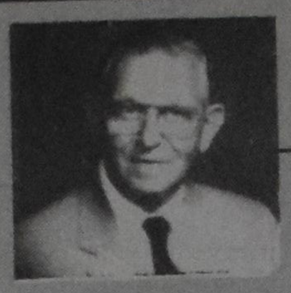
"Die Riekske van je." Hij maakte een onheilspellend gebaar van hals afsnijden. Ik schrok even. "Wat is er met hem? Is hij geweest? Hoe is het?"

"Moet je nodig vragen," spotte hij. "Ik moest de electrische zaag gebruiken om het verband er af te halen. Geen wonder dat je er zo zeker van was, dat ze er niet aan zouden komen."

"Ja, maar hoe is hij, hoe ziet hij er uit? " vroeg ik ongeduldig. Als enig antwoord stak hij zijn duim op en voegde er toen aan toe: "Fantastisch. Bij jullie in Holland zeggen ze altijd: Zeg het met bloemen. Jij zegt het met elastoplast. Het zat er wel duimendik bovenop."

Hier in Canada zeggen ze dan: "He made my day," en dat was het.

Lini Grol schrijft engelse en hollandse verhalen. Ze is ook bedreven in kuipselkunst en woont in Fonthill, Ontario.



Onder de streep

John Van Harmelen

De Tien Geboden des Heren

Exodus XX:1-17,

Deuteronomium V:6-21

1. Mijn ziel, herdenk met heilig beven,
Hoe God, met majesteit bekleed,
Zijn wet op Horeb heeft gegeven,
Waar Hij deez' woorden horen deed:

2. Ik ben de HEER, uw God en Koning,
Die van Egypte u bevrij',
U leidend uit uw slaafse woning;
Dient dan geen goden nevens Mij.

3. Voor beeldendienst zult gij u wachten.
Ik ben de HEER, een ijv'rig God;
'k Straf die in drie en vier geslachten;
Maar schenk mijn dienaars 't zaligst lot.

4. Misbruikt geenszins de naam des HEREN;
Zweert nimmer ene valse eed;
Want hun, die zijne naam onteren,
Is zijn getergde wraak gereed.

5. Gedenkt en viert, met vee en magen,
De Sabbath, na zesdaagse vlijt;
God schiep 't heelal in zoveel dagen,
En heeft de Sabbath zich gewijd.

6. Gij zult uw ouders need'rig eren,
Opdat uw God, die eeuwig leeft,
Uw dagen gunstig moog' vermeeren,
In 't land, dat zijne hand u geeft.

7. Gij zult niet doodslaan, noch u wreken.
Breekt nooit de echt. Steelt niemands goed.
Gij zult geen vals getuig'nis spreken;
Bemint elk met een vroom gemoed.

8. Uw hart zal nimmer iets begeren
Van alles, wat uws naasten is;
Uw ziel zal, als uw mond, God eren,
En houden zijn getuigenis!

9. Och, of wij Uw gebôôn volbrachten!
Gena, o hoogste Majesteit
Gun door 't geloof in Christus krachten,
Om die te doen uit dankbaarheid.

Johannes Eusebius Voet
Melodie: L. Bourgeois 1549

Wat hebben velen onzer dit vroeger gezongen als nabetrachting op het lezen van de wet, vooral het laatste couplet.

Toen we in Canada kwamen, lieten sommige predikanten het zingen in het Nederlands. We zochten tevergeefs naar een Engelse vertaling in onze Psalter Hymnal.

Ik herinnerde mij, dat op een Predikanten-Conferentie in Grand Rapids in de godsdienstoefeningen een vertaling van Gezang 1 door Dewey Westra werd gebruikt.

In de nieuwe Psalter Hymnal komt Dewey's vertaling voor onder de "Bible Songs," nr. 305.

1. My soul, recalls with reverent wonder,
how God amid the fire and smoke,
proclaimed His holy law with thunder
from Sinai's mountain when He spoke.

2. I am the LORD your God and Sov'reign
who out of bondage set you free,
who saved you from the land of Egypt.
Then serve no other gods but me.

3. You shall not bow to graven idols,
for I, a jealous God, your LORD,
shall punish sin in those who hate me,
but love all those who keep my Word.

4. Know that the LORD will not condone those
who make His holiness profane.
He surely will not hold them guiltless
who take His holy name in vain.

5. Remember, keep the Sabbath holy,
the day God sanctified and blessed.
In six days you shall do your labour,
the seventh you and yours shall rest.

6. Respect your father and your mother,
obey and honour their command,
so you may well secure, and prosper
with length of days upon the land.

7. You shall not hate or kill your neighbour.
Do not commit adultery.
You shall not steal from one another
nor testify untruthfully.

8. You shall not covet the possessions
your neighbours value as their own;
the wife or husband, home or treasures
you shall respect as theirs alone.

9. Teach us, LORD God, to love your precepts,
the good commandments of your law.
Give us the grace to keep you statutes
with thankfulness and proper awe.

Text: Exodus 20:1-17; 1899-1979, alt.
Tune: Geneva, 1547
Dewey Westra, Les Commandements de Dieu

98 98 bedoelt te zeggen dat de hymn per couplet 4 regels telt. De eerste regel telt 9 lettergrepen, de tweede 8, de derde 9 en de vierde 8.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

De nieuwe Psalter Hymnal zal eerst wel vreemd aandoen. We hebben in de huidige Psalter Hymnal 310 nummers voor de 150 psalmen die er zijn. De nieuwe Psalter Hymnal heeft voor elke psalm een nummer. Er blijven dus nog 160 nummers over die nu gedeeltelijk ondergebracht worden in "Bible Songs."

Het is mij opgevallen, dat het Nederlandse Liedboek voor de kerken dit eerste gezang over de Tien Geboden des HEREN niet vermeldt.

Ook viel het mij op, dat er kerken zijn die zeven verschillende lezingen hebben van de Tien Geboden des HEREN. Het lijkt mij de moeite waard om een vergelijking van deze lezingen te maken, daar vooral de tekst van het vierde gebod in het geding komt. Wat de Christian Reformed Church betreft blijft zij, door Tien geboden des HEREN op te nemen in de Psalter Hymnal, in het spoor van Geneva, Louis Bourgeois!

J. Van Harmelen is emeritus predikant van de Christian Reformed Church. Hij woont in Caesarea, Ontario.

Books/Meditation

Robert VanderVennen, page editor

Scripture far above political ideologies

A book review essay

George Van Arragon

I would like to share my appreciation for a book I read last week. It's called *Liberation Theology*. Not an exciting title? To difficult for you? Not necessarily. The book is an introduction to various Latin American theology-of-liberation movements. It is written by a native El Salvadoran who has "personally experienced the sad economic and social reality that faces the great majority of Latin American people."

The approach to the subject is decidedly conservative-evangelical. Nunez obtained his B.A. at southern Methodist University and his Th.M. and Th.D. at Dallas Theological Seminary. His treatment is popular rather than technical: "I do not direct myself to specialists ... but rather to pastors and seminary students and to other evangelical Christians who desire to obtain basic information on the origin, nature and objectives of Latin American liberation theology."

Nunez writes, "I have the profound conviction that the written revelation of God is far above all political ideologies as the final word of authority for the faith and conduct of the Christian, and that every political system far from being absolute, is relative, imperfect and temporary and, therefore, is always subject to change, whereas the Word of the Lord abides forever."

Origins of liberation theology

Nunez traces the development of liberation theologies back to "their roots in the period of the Iberian conquest and colonization." The social and religious structures of a feudal medieval, Spanish and Portuguese culture were forcibly imposed and transplanted in Latin America.

The Roman Catholic Church, by and large, directly or indirectly, opted for the status quo and backed the semi-feudal system that was imported from Spain.

"The colonizers held the concept of aristocracy, of oligarchy, of civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy, not of democracy. The truth of the matter is that no one spoke of democracy in those days," writes Nunez.

Out of the matrix of poverty, persecution and oppression arose the various movements of liberation and the theologies of liberation. There is a wide spectrum of views, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Some advocate violence and revolution, while others reject violence and revolution. Some eagerly embrace Marxist interpretations and help, while others firmly reject Marxism in their program for liberation, though the latter are few in number.

The nature of liberation theology

After a sketch of origins, Nunez gives an historical outline of various influences upon liberation theology. He discusses how European theologies such as those of Barth, Bultmann and Moltmann and their followers influenced Latin American theological reflection.

Marxism also exerted a "powerful influence on liberation theology." Most liberation theologians appreciate and utilize "Marxist notions of economics," "work and class struggle," and "the ideological criticism of capitalism."

Nunez concludes, however, that "for the conservative evangelical Christian, the use of an ideology as the hermeneutic criterion for the study and exposition of scriptures is totally unacceptable."

Church and society in Latin America

One of the indigenous movements that was "concerned with responding theologically to the challenge of the social changes in Latin America long before the Second Vatican Council (1962-65)" was ISAL (*Iglesia y Sociedad en America Latina — Church and Society in Latin America*)." ISAL was a pioneering, Protestant movement among Christian university students promoted by the World Council of Churches. Most Latin American ecumenical theologians have had some contact with and participated in some of those Christian student movements at one time or another.

By the mid sixties ISAL took for granted that the church should become actively involved in contemporary revolutionary movements. The emphasis was on direct action to change the Latin American social structures which were perceived as unjust.

There was little concern with the spiritual hunger and spiritual bondage of man, as Dr. John R.W. Scott noted in his report to the Fourth Assembly of the WCC, Uppsala, 1968.

Subsequently, ISAL became increasingly radicalized and vocal and adopted a Marxist analysis and interpretation of both scripture and society. There was also a distinct inclination to move from dialogue to direct participation on the revolutionary struggle, and to do so at the grass roots level in the churches.

However, because of its strong ideological commitment and aggressive rhetoric, ISAL instead alienated itself from the masses and lost the popular support it needed for its agenda. This led to its demise in the early 1970s.

Nevertheless, the Isaline movement has challenged evangelical Christians in Latin American to formulate a more biblical response to their social circumstances. Many of its criticism of church and society were valid and continue to be valid, but ISAL did not provide a scriptural alternative or program of action.

Catholic liberation theology

Vatican II set in motion currents of renewal in Latin America (and elsewhere as well) that it was unable to contain and that were to have widespread repercussions. Perhaps one of the most significant was that the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church itself began to become involved in the social struggles of the poor and oppressed and in a matter of decades switched it allegiance from the wealthy, land-holding ruling elite to the poor, whose cause they now espoused.

The new slogans were "justice for the poor," "common solidarity" and "liberty, humanity and dignity" and such. Pope Paul VI encouraged the movements set in action by Pope John XXIII.

The encouragement of Vatican II was a significant factor in the development of various liberation programs and in the awakening of a social conscience among the masses in Latin America.

Nunez discusses the influence of various conferences (episcopal councils) held in Brazil and Colombia in 1955 and 1968. There is a discernible movement from spiritual-theological-ecclesiastical topics at the former to social-economic-ethical concerns at the later conferences.

The third episcopal council which met at Puebla in Mexico in 1979 exerted something of an ecclesiastical brake to the process of renewal and liberation. This conservative shift or response provided something of a needed balance to the Catholic liberation movements which had begun to emphasize social action at the cost of personal faith and spirituality.

Methods and themes

In the second half of his book, Nunez deals with the method of liberation theology and gives an overview of some of its fundamental themes, such as: salvation and liberation, Jesus the liberator and the ecclesiology of liberation. Throughout he offers perceptive and biblical critique of various facets of the method and themes of liberation theology.

Nunez closes with these words: "What many of us Latin American evangelicals hope is that those who are the most serene and stable in the biblical faith will participate, [i.e., in the ongoing process of reflection and awakening of social consciousness among evangelicals] so that the evangelical church may fully assume its social responsibility without straying from the path marked out by the written revelation of God. May our action be motivated and directed, always and everywhere, by that revelation,"

I say "Amen" to that. I found this an utterly fascinating and absorbing book. I'm only sorry that this already lengthy review prevents me from adequately reviewing the method and themes of liberation theology as outlined by Nunez.

If you are interested in liberation theology but don't know much about it, read this book for a starter and praise the Lord for our brothers and sisters in the faith in Latin America. May justice and righteousness (and sound theology!) together with a warm, living, vital faith prevail there in due time.

Rev. George Van Arragon is on study leave in St. Catharines. He is available for call.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

A never-ending story

"... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **(Acts 1:8b)**

In 1979, German author Michael Ende delighted readers around the world with a captivating tale called *The Neverending Story*. A young lad, Bastian Balthazar Bux, who seems as out of step with his world as his name, enters a secret and magical kingdom known as Fantastica. Joining in the struggles between good and evil there, he is transformed into a sensitive and competent young man. When he returns to the "real" world of life with his father and school and everything else, he is no longer the same, having had a glimpse of the deeper meaning of things. And his story ends with his story never-ending, for he has become a participant in the mission to bring the "Water of Life" from Fantastica to a colourless and dying world.

There is a "fairy tale" like quality to the message of the Christian gospel. The battle of the kingdoms, the spiritual forces, the miraculous life of the Son of God, the "happily ever after" promise at the end of the story, all parallel in some aspects fairy tales like that of Michael Ende's *Neverending Story*. The obvious difference is that the gospel of the Bible is a message of ultimate truth and reality, not merely the delightrful construct of wishful thinking.

The book of Acts takes the "water of life" story beyond the days of Jesus Christ, and out into the world. And in these final words of Jesus (1:8b) there is a blueprint which gives structure to the witness of the apostles, and outline to the record of their Acts. After the introductory matters of the first two chapters, we are told of the gospel's impact on Jerusalem. (3:1-6:7) Then comes its penetration into Judea and Samaria (6:8-9:31), to the larger Gentile world (9:32-12:24), on into Asia Minor (12:25-16:5), and Europe. (16:6-19:20) Each of these sections ends with a "progress report," telling how much the gospel seeds of the Word of God are growing and multiplying in a harvest of spiritual fruit. But the final section of the book (19:21-28:31) ends rather abruptly. No progress report is given; no sense of completion finishes the work.

Some have argued that doctor Luke wrote or meant to write a three-volume documentary of the early church. We have instalments one and two in the gospel that bears his name, and in this companion history of the early church. But somewhere the last part of the trilogy was lost or never written, and that accounts for the unfulfilling close of chapter 28.

But Luke's record is powerfully complete when seen as part of a never-ending story. Having saturated smaller sections of the globe with messengers of the water of life, the missionary church follows the lead of the Apostle Paul to Rome, capital of the whole world. And in Jesus' outline, the mission continues. The gospel message has reached Rome, but its penetration "to the end of the earth" is not yet complete. You and I are part of Acts 28:32, the still unfolding saga of the true "neverending story." What progress report are you adding today?

Wayne Brouwer is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ontario.